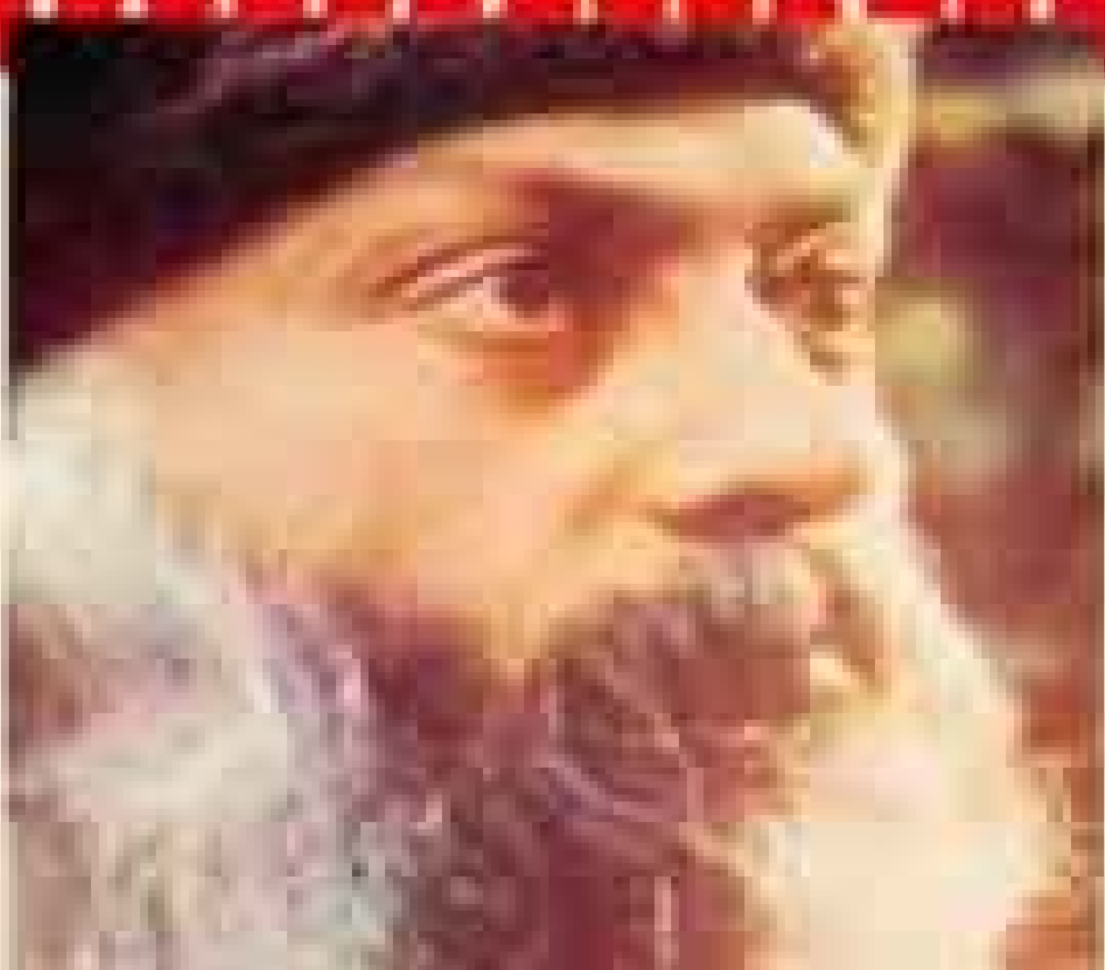
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Beware of Socialism!



Beware of Socialism

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Beware of Socialism

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I would like to begin my talk today with an anecdote.

In a great city, one day, the streets were crowded with tens of thousands of

people. They were waiting with great expectation for the arrival of the king. A little later the royal procession came, and everybody in that huge crowd started talking admiringly about the king's celestial garments. But strangely enough, the king was completely naked; he had not a shred of clothes on him.

In all the crowd only one small child, who came perched on his father's shoulders, saw it, and he said to his father with amazement, "Everybody is talking about the king's clothes, but I see he is completely naked." His father said, "Keep quiet, you fool. We will be in great trouble if someone heard what you said." And the father hurriedly made his way out of the crowd.

The king was naked. and the people were praising his garments. What was the matter?

A few months earlier a clever man had come to the court and offered to bring the garments of The gods for the king. He said to him, "Although you have conquered the world, yet you don't have the clothes of the gods. I can make them available to you." The king's greed was aroused. He had everything, but he did not have the gods' clothes. He had not seen them; he had not even heard of them. The man said. "You don't worry. It will cost you a little, but I will bring them for you." He asked for six months' time.

The man was locked in a house in the palace, and armed guards were placed all around him. The man, from time to time, asked for large sums of money. And in the course of six months he was paid many millions of rupees from the treasury. But as he was imprisoned in the palace and so could not escape with the money, the king was undisturbed.

After six months the man returned to the court with the godly clothes in a costly box.

Many kings had been invited to the court to witness the great event. The man opened the box and said to the king, "Please give me your turban." He put the king's turban in the box, took out another one, and proceeded to place it on the head of the king. But his hands were empty, and the king saw it well. The man said to the king, "Do you see the turban?" And then he said in a whisper, "When I was leaving for your court, the gods told me that only those who are legitimate sons of their fathers will be able to see these celestial clothes." His hands were empty, but immediately the king started "seeing" the turban. And he said, "Never

have I seen such a gorgeous turban."

So one by one, all the king's clothes were taken away and put in the box. and the king put on the clothes that were not there at all. He was gradually disrobed. And when it came to the last piece the king was very disturbed. But the man said, "It is no use worrying now.

The journey of untruth, once begun, has to be completed. There is no way out. And what will the people say?" And then he openly announced to the court that these clothes would be visible only to those who were truly their fathers' sons. And the king was deprived of the last article of his clothing. But now everybody in the court "saw" the heavenly garments, which were not there at all. Each one of the courtiers thought that when the clothes were visible to all others, they must be there. He also felt, to his shame, that he was the only one in the gathering who was unable to see the clothes, so his parentage was in doubt; but it was wise to keep it to himself.

All this had happened inside the palace.

Then the man said,"Your Highness, the gods also said that as this was the first time that divine clothes were being sent to the earth, it is necessary that they be celebrated by being taken out in a procession. Your chariot is ready. Let us go out." The king was worried once again. But the man said promptly, "Don't worry at all. The drummers will be going at the head of your procession announcing that the gods' clothes will be visible only to those who are truly born of their fathers. So everyone will see them, you need not worry."

The king mounted the chariot, and the procession began. Everybody in the crowd in the streets saw that the king was naked, but no one had the guts to say it. Only a small child had said so, and for this he was scolded by his father. His father had said, "Keep quiet, you fool, you are simply inexperienced in the ways of the world. When you will be a grownup, you will begin to see the clothes. Let us go home, because we will be in trouble if someone heard what you said."

Why do I begin my talk on socialism with this anecdote? What is the point?

In the name of socialism today a great uproar is being raised all over the world. In this huge crowd, shouting hurray to socialism, my position is like that of the little child who exclaimed, "Father, the king is stark naked; there are no clothes on his body." I feel it is time somebody said it.

Human nature is such that it accepts a well-published lie as truth. A lie repeated again and again begins to look like truth. And truth said for the first time does not look like truth. For the last hundred years a systematic myth has been created around socialism.

And its constant propaganda and slogan-mongering have made socialists of those who are not socialists at all. Even those who do not accept it in their hearts have begun to sing hymns of praise to socialism. And no one seems to have the courage to speak against it. I am an inexperienced man in the world of the experienced, and, therefore, I am going to speak out against socialism.

The history of mankind says that it is not necessary that what the large crowd, the masses, accept should be the truth. The crowd has always accepted great lies, and lived with them. Now a new lie, in the name of socialism, has captured the minds of men. So it is essential to understand its full implications.

The first thing to understand is that socialism today stands as an enemy, in opposition to capitalism. But whatever socialism may be, it is the child of capitalism. Capitalism arose out of the system of feudalism. And if capitalism is allowed to develop fully, it will lead to socialism. And socialism, allowed to run its full course, will turn into communism.

And in the same way communism can lead to anarchism. But the basic condition is that these systems should be allowed to evolve fully, completely. But a child can be forced prematurely out of its mother's womb, and the mother may feel tempted to have a child sooner than later. An impatient mother may want to have the child in five months, instead of nine; she will escape four months of labor and see her child earlier. But such a child will be a dead child, not a living one. And even if the child survives, it will be worse than dead.

The socialism that was born in Russia is such a premature child. Russia was not a capitalist country, so socialism was forced on it much before its time. Socialism was born, but it was born dead. That is why ten million people, all poor people, the very people for whom socialism was ushered in, had to be killed mercilessly. Perhaps in the history of mankind no other country has resorted to such colossal killings as the two socialist countries, Russia and China, have done. And the irony is that the people who were slaughtered were those for whom socialism was brought in. Russia never had ten million capitalists. Ten million capitalists don't exist even in America today. Yet ten millions were

butchered in Russia, that we know. And they were those for whom socialism came into being.

But killing becomes easy when killing is done "in your own interest". When somebody kills in your name you are disarmed, you cannot even defend yourself.

And even after murdering ten millions of their men and women and children, Russia remains a poor country. Even today Russia is not a rich country. Its socialism is anemic and sick; it is lifeless. And that's why Russia, for the last few years, has been reverting to the capitalist way. The mistake they made is being corrected by a return to capitalist measures. The basic conflict of Mao Tse-tung with Russia is just this: that Russia is increasingly turning to capitalism.

Experiences of the past fifty years have made Russia realize that socialism was a hasty step on their part, because they have not created capital, created wealth. Remember, if capitalism is developed properly, socialism will be its natural outcome -- in a pregnancy of nine months the child comes out of its mother's womb naturally and silently. So, talk of socialism when capitalism has not yet grown to its full height, is suicidal.

I am myself a socialist, so it will surprise you when I ask you to beware of socialism. I also want the child of socialism to come to India, but on one condition -- that it completes its full nine months in the mother's womb. This country has not achieved capitalism as yet. So talk of socialism here at this moment is as dangerous... as dangerous as it proved in Russia, and is going to be proved in China. China is out to kill millions, and yet socialism will not come there, because nothing in life happens before its time. The law of life does not permit haste. This country has yet to develop its capitalist system.

It is necessary to understand what capitalism means. Today the word "capitalism" comes to our minds as a four-letter word. It is now a much maligned word. We rush to condemn capitalism without knowing what good it has done to human society, and that it is the instrument that will lead human society to socialism. If all men are ever going to achieve equality, if they all are ever going to be free of poverty and attain to affluence, then a hundred percent credit for it will go to capitalism.

It is, however, essential that we understand a few things about capitalism very

clearly.

First, capitalism is a system that creates capital, creates wealth. Before capitalism, no other system in the world had produced capital. By capital I do not mean natural resources -- it is that tangible wealth which is man's own creation. If man had not created it, it would not have come on its own from the earth or the skies. Wealth means solid wealth, accumulated capital, which today is the source of all investment, all production.

The wealth in the present world is created wealth. And it does not include that natural wealth which is available from land and sea, from mine and forest, from stream and waterfall, or from anywhere else. During the last hundred and fifty years, capitalism brought into being a real wealth-producing system.

All the social systems that preceded capitalism were predatory systems -- systems wholly based on plunder and loot. Whether it was Genghis or Tamburlaine or any feudal lords of the world, they all had plundered their people and filled their coffers with the wealth of looting. But the wealth in the capitalist system is different: capitalism created its own wealth.

Without giving thought to it, we are accustomed to equating capitalism with the feudal system. We think that capitalism has also exploited others' wealth. This is not so.

Capitalism has really created capital; it has really produced wealth, lots of wealth.

When wealth is created, then, and only then its equitable distribution is possible. Without creating wealth, what are we going to distribute? Today, Indira Gandhi and her foolish friends think that socialism can be established in India, and that wealth can be distributed.

It means that they are thinking of distributing wealth without having it. Today, the country has no wealth. If we embark on distribution, we can only distribute poverty, not wealth. There is no wealth and poverty we have in abundance. And it is already widely distributed.

Distribution is necessary, but before distribution we have to have wealth. Production comes first; distribution follows it. Capitalism produces wealth and socialism distributes it. If there is no capitalism, and so no wealth, then socialism

can distribute only poverty and misery. If our country decides to go socialist, it means that we decide to remain poor, and poor forever. It cannot be anything else, because we don't have the instruments that produce wealth.

The second thing to understand is that all the people of the world have not contributed to the creation of wealth. Wealth today is the handiwork of a handful of people, a few individuals. It has not been created by the masses. Only a Rockefeller, only a Morgan, a Rothschild, a Tata, a Birla, a Sahu creates capital, not everybody. If we remove ten names from America, America would be as poor as we are. Without them, America could not have achieved its present affluence.

I have heard that once Henry Ford went to London. At the airport he walked up to the inquiry office and asked for a cheap hotel. The clerk at the inquiry booth recognized him, and he said, "I have seen your photographs in the newspapers; it seems you are Henry Ford. Why do you ask for a cheap hotel? When your sons and daughters come here, they ask for the most expensive hotels." Ford replied, "My sons are the sons of Henry Ford, sons of a very rich man, while I am the son of a poor man. I have made wealth myself. I am not the son of a Ford who produced wealth. So let me find a cheap hotel."

Whatever wealth America possesses today is the creation of a handful of inventive geniuses and a few others who knew the art of producing wealth. Why didn't the whole world produce wealth? Why does not India produce it today? It is still so poor. India has the oldest culture, yet we could not produce wealth. We failed to develop the art of creating capital, because as a people we have been against wealth, anti-wealth. That is why our genius could not take the road to prosperity and affluence. Whatever intelligence and talent we had, we channelized it in the direction of sannyas, renunciation. The man who could have been a Ford became a Shankaracharya. The man who could have been a Rockefeller became Gautam the Buddha. So we produced great sannyasins; we produced Buddha, Shankara, Nagarjuna, Mahavira. But we failed to produce able capitalists --

those skilled in creating wealth. Because of our opposition to riches, we could not direct our talent that way.

A traveler, Count Keyserling, after his visit to India, wrote in his diary a small sentence:

"India is a rich country where poor people live." I was a little amazed to read it. And I thought Keyserling was simply crazy. If India was a rich country, how could its people be poor? And if its people were poor, how could it be called a rich country? But then I understood his joke. A paradox -- and yet how true! India has the potential, the talent to become rich, but it is essential that the country's talent and will flow in that direction in an organized manner. Then only riches are produced.

Please do not remain under the illusion that capital is produced by labor, by the toil of the laborer. The laborer, the worker, is not the creator of wealth. The primitive people all over have been toiling for ages, and yet they could not produce any wealth. The poor of Africa have been toiling hard, and yet Africa is steeped in poverty. The poor of Asia also have been toiling, but are as poor as any. If labor could produce wealth, the whole world would have been rolling in wealth. The producer of wealth is someone else. He is the entrepreneur -- the creative talent behind capitalism. Capitalism gave opportunity to such talent to produce, organize and manage wealth. Capitalism is organized production on a mass scale.

The great change which capitalism made was that it substituted manual labor with machines. Because man's labor cannot produce wealth. However hard his hands toil, they cannot produce enough even to fill his stomach.

In the time of Buddha, the entire population of India was twenty millions. And this population could not have been bigger than this, because nine out of ten children had to die for lack of food, medicines and housing. There was no way to save them. But during the last hundred and fifty years, a tremendous thing happened; it is called the population-explosion. Today there are three and a half billion people on our planet. Three and a half billion people are alive today, only because of capitalism. Without it they would have perished. It was unthinkable in the times before capitalism that this planet could maintain such a huge population. What did capitalism do?

First, it replaced man with the machine; it introduced technology. It freed man from labor and engaged the machine. This in its turn had two results. The capacity of the machine is limitless; man's capacity is very limited. What one machine can do in a day will need tens of thousands of men, even millions, to do with their hands. It is because of the machine that the phenomenon of mass production was possible. With the machine began the enormous stockpiling of

wealth in the world.

And secondly, with the advent of the machine man became free -- free from slavery. The end of serfdom. liquidation of slavery, was another gift of capitalism to mankind. Had not the machine come into being slavery would never have ended. It was impossible to banish serfdom and slavery without the machine. Without the machine man would have had to remain in bondage because then he was bound to be forced to work, whipped to work hard. For without force it is not possible to make a man work hard. Only with the coming of the machine could slavery be liquidated.

Today man is free: he is not a slave.

But socialism has been spreading another illusion, another lie. It has given currency to a false notion that it is labor, it is the worker, who creates capital and wealth. It is not really so. Already labor plays a secondary part, a very small, insignificant part in the production of wealth. And sooner or later the worker is going to become superfluous. Then the machine will have replaced him entirely. Within fifty years there will be no man known as a laborer on this earth. And it will be good. It is degrading for a man to do a job which a machine can do. So the worker will be useless. Gradually the worker has been ceasing to be a part of the productive system. And in fifty years he will become wholly useless.

He will not be needed at all because labor is a non-essential part of production.

The essential part of production is the productive mind. But socialists have given currency to an illusion that wealth has been produced by muscles, brawn, and that labor is the kingpin of the productive machine. If this insistent lie wins, and brawn dominates the brain, then mind will disappear, and brawn will return to the very time, thousands of years before, when poverty and starvation stalked the earth.

The entire wealth of the world has been the invention of the mind. Mind has created all wealth. And remember, not all the people have contributed to its production. All the people have not even worked for it. One Einstein discovers a law, and the whole of mankind profits from it. One Ford creates wealth, and it becomes distributed among all.

But it is being said that the capitalist exploits the wealth of the people. There could be no greater lie than this. The wealth that does not exist, how can it be

exploited. Only that wealth call be exploited which exists some where. How can a non-existing wealth be exploited?

Capitalism does not exploit; it creates wealth. But once wealth is created, it begins to show, and becomes the object of envy for thousands. The hold of socialism is not because it believes in equality between man and man. It is not true that every man thinks the other as his equal. The basic cause of its hold is the innate jealousy of man. He is jealous of those who have succeeded, who have prospered, who have sought and found a place in life. A major part of mankind has always lived in inertia; they have never produced wealth or power or knowledge. But they have certainly become conscious. They have come to see that some people have intelligence and knowledge and wealth. They have something. And for sure, the jealousy of the masses, of millions of masses, can be aroused and whetted. The revolution that took place in Russia was the result of jealousy.

So was the Chinese revolution. And the talk of socialism in India also stems from this very source. Jealousy is behind them all. But remember, we cannot transform a society through jealousy. And also remember, the transformation that comes through jealousy can never be fruitful, nor can it bring peace, well-being and happiness to society. It can't do any good. It is also good to remember that through jealousy we can destroy a system, but cannot create a new order. Jealousy has never been a creative force; it can unmake, it can destroy, but it cannot make -- jealousy cannot even think of it.

I have heard that a man died. Before he died he called all his sons to his deathbed and asked them for a promise. They were asked to fulfill a last wish of their dying father. His elder sons were wise about the ways of their father, so they kept their distance. But the youngest did not know his father well, and he went to him. The father said to him in a whisper,"You are my only true son, and I entrust you with a responsibility. After I am dead, cut my body into pieces and throw them at the houses of the neighbors." When the son asked, "What do you mean?~" the dying man said, "When my soul will be on its way to heaven, I will have great peace of mind to see my neighbors being driven to jail. My heart will be well-satiated. All my life I desired to send them to prison. One neighbor has a big house, while mine is so small. The other has beautiful horses, and I have none. They have this thing and that thing, while I have nothing. The least I can do is this: after my death my corpse should be sliced into pieces and thrown on their rooftops."

This man lives in jealousy. You can, for sure, have a big house, but not through jealousy.

It happens through creativity. Yes, Jealousy can reduce a big house into a small one, hut it cannot turn the small house into a big house. Jealousy has no creative power, it is the companion of death. not of life.

Jealousy is at the root of the influence that socialism has in the world. Jealousy is its very foundation. What is interesting is that this jealousy does not afflict the really poor people as much as it does those who are midway between the poor and the rich -- the political leaders. And remember, the harm their jealousy will do to the rich is not that big.

Ultimately it will be the poor who will suffer the most. Because the wealth that the rich ones are creating is ultimately going to pass into the hands of the poor; it is already reaching them, it is bound to reach them. There is no way to stop this process.

Once I was traveling by train to Delhi. A gentleman was with me in the same compartment. On our way we came across a big building, and around it were a few huts.

The gentleman, pointing the big house out to me, said, "Do you see that large mansion, how it has become so big? It has done so at their cost, at the cost of those huts. It is responsible for their miserable state!" I said to him, "You see it the wrong way. You remove the big house from their midst, and see what happens. The small ones will not become big with the removal of the big building; rather, they will just disappear. It is because of the construction of that large building that the huts have come into being; it is as it should be. The small ones owe their existence to the large house. No house can be built alone. When a large house is constructed, ten small ones come up in its wake. After all, who is going to work for the construction of the big house? And if you pull it down, all others will soon disappear."

In the past, if ten babies were born, nine of them had to die. Capitalism has saved those nine from death. As a result, there has been phenomenal growth in the population of the poor, who have to live in small houses, in hovels. It is a painful thing that they live in miserable conditions. But the problem of providing them with good houses will not be solved by pulling down the big ones.

I say that if the big ones are destroyed, the small ones will also perish. They have come in the wake of the big ones. In a way, the nine surviving children, who used to die in the past, owe their lives to the big houses. It is because of capitalism that the worker gets employment and wages and houses to live in. That worker will die if you expropriate capital and distribute it.

Our efforts should be to raise the workers to the height of the capitalists. On the contrary, we are trying to pull down the latter to the level of workers. We have to strive to turn the small houses into big houses. And to do so we will have to construct bigger and still bigger houses. Then alone we can attain to socialism, and not otherwise.

But very often false reasoning comes in our way. This is happening in communist China.

They think that by destroying the big houses, they will raise the height of the small ones.

This is not possible. Surely the big house will go, but that will not help the poor. If the poor people, with small houses, could build big houses, they would have done it a long time back. No, with the destruction of the rich, the poor will return to their old inertia, their habitual lethargy.

Before being removed from his high office in Russia, Khrushchev had made a very significant statement which is worth considering. He said that the greatest problem that his country was facing was that no one was wiling to work, that the youth of Russia was not at all interested in doing anything. It is strange that the workers of Russia, the young men of that socialist country, are not willing to work. They are lapsing into lethargy and laziness. Stalin had forced them to work, and so the way he was treated after his death is understandable. His dead body was removed from he grave in Red Square facing the Kremlin, where he used to acknowledge the salutes of his people for decades. As long as he was alive, he tyranized Russia like a monster and indulged in mass killing. Force and fear of death had made the people work. But as soon as that fear was removed, people lapsed into inaction.

Capitalism, on the other hand, introduced the factor of incentive in production -- the incentive to work, to produce. Productive work became very attractive. This attraction, this incentive to work, will go if capitalism goes. This is what has

happened in Russia.

But there is a way out of this dilemma. If capitalism is allowed its full growth, and socialism stems from capitalism very naturally, then incentive will remain. And it seems to me this is possible. It will be possible in America. How paradoxical it is, but it is true nonetheless, that in the course of the next fifty years America will increasingly move toward socialism and Russia will move toward capitalism. Without knowing and without a bloody revolution America is turning socialist every day. Why? Because when there is abundant wealth, too much wealth, private ownership of propertY becomes meaningless.

Private ownership will be useless only when there is an abundance of wealth, much more than is needed. If we go to a village today, we will find that there is no private ownership of water, because in the village there is plenty of water for a small number of inhabitants.

But if there is a shortage of water tomorrow, and the number of inhabitants goes up, personal ownership of water will come in. Now air is free for all. But if tomorrow there is a shortage of air, shortage of oxygen, and the number of people increases, then clever and resourceful people will store oxygen in tanks and lock them up in their houses. Private ownership will have started. Private ownership of wealth will last as long as there is scarcity of wealth and excess of population. There is only one logical and natural way of ending private ownership, and it is that wealth becomes as abundant as air and water.

And it is possible. Even today, one who is considered poor in America, is a rich man according to Russian standards. The rich man of Russia is way behind the poor man of America. But it is not accidental. And it is a matter of serious consideration that even after fifty years of socialism Russia remains a poor country. For the last ten years. Russia has not even been producing enough food for its people. It is not only India which has to import food from outside, even Russia has been buying its food from the capitalist countries. Where is socialism if socialist bellies have to be filled with capitalist food?

Lethargy and sloth have gripped Russia once again capitalism provides incentive to work, to produce. If that incentive is removed, then force is the only alternative. Then you have to make the people work at gunpoint. But a social order maintained by force cannot be lasting.

I have heard an anecdote about Khrushchev.

Khrushchev was addressing a party meeting and vehemently criticizing Stalin. Somebody from the rear of the gathering said, "Sir, when Stalin was committing these crimes, murdering millions, deporting tens of thousands to concentration camps in Siberia, giving the whole of Russia a bloodbath, you were with him. Why did not you protest then?"

Khrushchev became silent for a full minute, then he said: "Will the gentleman who asked this question kindly send me his name and address?" But the man did not rise in his seat again. Then Khrushchev said, "You please rise and just show your face." Yet nobody stood up. Khrushchev then said, "I remained quiet for the very reason which forces you to be quiet right now. To remain alive I had to keep quiet."

In capitalism, wealth is produced in a very natural manner. Capitalism does not use a stick, a gun, or force of any kind. It provides incentive to work, to produce. Every person has a small world of his own, and his own motivation, his drive. If my wife is sick, I can work through the night for her sake, but if I am told that humanity is on its sickbed, it will go over my head. Humanity is such a distant thing that I fail to relate with it. I remain completely unaffected. To educate my child I can do anything. I can toil under the midday sun. But if you tell me that we have to educate all mankind, it does not inspire and stir me at all. It seems so unreal. I can very well understand and appreciate if you suggest that I should have a house of my own with a beautiful garden in the front, but tell me to work for the prosperity and well-being of the nation, to turn it into a great garden, and the thing gets lost in smoke.

The circle of man's consciousness is very small; it is like an earthen lamp shedding its light on a limited area of five square feet around itself. Such is man's consciousness; its scope is very limited. The family is that small circle of man's consciousness. He has largely been confined to his family so far, and he has not yet grown enough to go beyond its limit. As he tries to raise his sights beyond the family -- society, nation and humanity are the beyonds -- he begins to lose his interest, his incentive, his drive. Society, nation and humanity -- these are such vast spaces that they do not mean a thing to him, they do not affect his consciousness. They simply don't inspire him.

Capitalism launched a drive for production of wealth on this very basis -- on the

basis of man's limited interests, individual incentives. It made him work and earn for himself and his family. And the drive succeeded immensely. Capitalism created both knowledge and wealth. The knowledge we gained in the hundred and fifty years of capitalism equals the knowledge of the world gained over a period of eighteen hundred years after Christ. And again, mankind has gained as much knowledge in the last fifteen years as it had gained in the first hundred and fifty years of capitalism. And the amount of knowledge gained in the last five years again equals the previous gains. What the old world had taken eighteen hundred years to achieve, the world of capitalism has done in just five years. A miracle indeed!

And still we go on condemning capitalism without realizing what it has done for us. It has prepared the way for every man and woman to participate in the production of wealth. It has created that space where wealth will rain like water. It has laid the groundwork for the coming of immense affluence, for an abundance of wealth. And the day we have that abundance of wealth the child of capitalism will be born. That will be true socialism.

What do I mean when I warn you against socialism? I ask you to let the time of pregnancy be complete. Capitalism is that time of pregnancy -- let it complete nine months. Even Marx had not imagined that capitalism would first be liquidated in Russia, because Russia was not capitalist. Marx had not dreamed that China would turn communist, because that country was then terribly backward and poor. Marx had thought that capitalism would break down first in America or Germany. But it broke down in Russia and China. And now the effort in India is to liquidate it. These are all poor and backward countries without any capital, without any assets. But they have one thing in abundance: they have large masses of the poor. And the envy of the masses can be easily aroused.

Marx's thinking was very scientific. He rightly said that capitalism would be abolished in the most developed countries, where it would have attained its full growth. Because when wealth is abundant, private property becomes meaningless. Marx did not know that revolutions would be made, not on the measure of capitalistic development and affluence, but by exciting the jealousy of the pool. The countries that became socialist are all very poor countries. Socialism should have first come to America, but it did not. In a way, socialism is entering America, but very silently. Whatever is significant in life comes very silently; it does not come with drums and trumpets. No one knows when a seed

bursts into a sprout; no announcement is made when the sun rises. Whatever is meaningful in life walks on silent feet. and one comes to know of its coming only after it has already come. What comes with drums and trumpets, know it is trying to come before its time.

Socialism wants to come drumming and shouting, and without knowing that it cannot come until capitalism is completed. What will happen in India if we destroy its nascent, developing capitalistic system, and embark on distributing its scanty wealth? This will, of course, gratify the poor man's jealousy, but he does not know that this will also bring still more poverty and misery for him.

The system of capital-building in India today needs every cooperation. Indeed, it is the right time for India to take a decision and resolve that in fifty years' time we will create capitalism and become capitalist. Then socialism will come; it is then bound to come --

and it will come of itself. It will not need an Indira or anyone else to help it come. It will come on its own, like capitalism. Did anyone bring in capitalism? No, capitalism came by itself when the feudal system reached its peak. Socialism will come the same way. But patience is needed, patience is essential. And we seem to have no patience at all. And impatience will cause us so much harm that it cannot be calculated. And will it be any use to be wiser after the event?

I have heard... Once a socialist visited the USA's Rothschild and said, "You have grabbed the wealth of the nation. If you redistribute it, the country will become rich." Rothschild heard him patiently, then took out a piece of paper, made some calculations, handed him five cents and said, "Here is your share. You take it. And whoever else will come to me I will give him his share. If I were to distribute my entire wealth, each person in the country would get five cents. I am prepared to distribute, and I will not refuse anyone who comes for his share. But do you think socialism will come if everyone gets five cents?"

Rothschild had at least five cents to give. Birla, Tata and Sahu of India will not be able to give even one cent. We do not have capitalists as such, because capitalism here is in its embryonic stage. Bombay is a little well-off, but Bombay is not India. The whole of India is poor. Her living conditions today are like those of Europe before the industrial revolution. We have not even had our industrial revolution, and we are dreaming about socialism. First, let the industrial revolution come. First, let the whole country be covered with

industries and industries. Let the whole country be engaged in producing wealth; let there be millions of big and small Tatas and Birlas, and kt the whole country be filled with wealth. And when there is abundant wealth here, no Tata, no Birla can stop the distribution of that wealth.

My understanding of the problem is this: It is only the Tatas and Birlas who can produce that enormous wealth which is needed for distribution. Distribution cannot happen otherwise.

If I warn you against socialism, it does not mean that I am the enemy of socialism. In fact, the socialists of the day are its enemies, for they do not know what they are doing.

They are setting on fire the very house they live in. They will be burned, and with them the whole country will be burned.

India's poverty is very chronic. So think well before you take a step in this direction. Let not the capital-forming process in this country break down. In fact, it is already weakening, but we do not see it. It seems we have decided not to see anything with open eyes. The government is making a mess of everything it undertakes to do. For every one rupee invested in the private sector of industries, we have invested two in the public sector. But all the public undertakings are running at a loss. Yet the government says that all the industries should be nationalized.

It is important to see and understand what is hiding behind the facade of socialism. We talk of socialism, when in reality it is state-ism that comes. In the name of socialism, state capitalism is enthroned. It is nothing but state capitalism. Socialism means that the society should own wealth; that is, wealth should be in the hands of the society. Does this really happen in socialist countries? The contrary happens. From the hands of the society, wealth passes into the hands of the state. Where we had innumerable capitalists, now there is only one -- the state. And we know how inefficient the state is. Even the petty shopkeeper in a village is not as inefficient as the state. The inefficiency of the state is appalling. Even the petty grocer, even the peddler in the street, is more intelligent than the state. And we think of entrusting the entire wealth of the country and all its means of production to this state. One wonders if India has decided to commit hara-kiri!

It will be dangerous. Men who hold power are already mad -- mad with power. They now want to take over the power of wealth as well. They cannot tolerate that wealth should remain in the hands of others. In fact, power-drunk people all over the world are anxious to grab economic power for themselves. Then they will have total power, absolute power in their hands. Political power plus economic power makes for what is called totalitarianism. Political power alone was enough to turn their heads; if economic power also passes into their hands, they will become dictators. And then nothing can be done to remove them . After all, nothing could be done to remove Stalin and Hitler from power.

Do you know that Hitler was a socialist? The name of his party was the National Socialist Party. He was also a socialist. Now Mao cannot be removed from power.

And also remember, governments in the world already hold enormous power, political power. If economic power also passes into their hands, the individual will become quite impotent. The whole nation will become impotent. Then the individual is left with no power, nothing. You may not be aware that individual freedom, freedom of thought, can only exist if there is political freedom, if there is economic freedom. If economic and political power are in the hands of a single group, then the individual is deprived of his freedom of thought. There is no freedom of thought in Russia. There is no freedom of thought in China. Tomorrow it may not be here in India either.

But these things happen step by step -- gradually -- and take people unawares. Take away a man's property and you destroy ninety percent of his personality. With the loss of property, he is ninety percent dead. With the loss of property his capacity to think withers away, because his capacity to be an individual, to be himself, has withered away. The individual will die if the state has absolute power. Currently, the greatest problem facing the whole world, and even this country, is how to save the individual. The state is out to grab everything, but it grabs with cunning. There is a method in its madness. It grabs power in the name of the people themselves. It says this iS being done in their interest; it is in their interest that wealth and means of production are being taken over. So the politicians not only usurp power, they also win the applause of the people, the very people who are being dispossessed. The people who applaud them do not know that they are applauding their hangmen, who are tighening the noose around their necks. Soon they will be hanged.

Once property and the means of production pass into the hands of the state, that state becomes absolute, despotic. And in the same measure the individual becomes helpless and impotent before it. The individual becomes faceless, even soulless. For the last fifty years a small group of fifty persons is ruling Russia. Power has constantly remained in the hands of this group; it is not allowed to go elsewhere. Whether Stalin dies or Khrushchev comes in; whether Kosygin, Breshnev or whosoever is there, this caucus of fifty, tightly entrenched in power, has been keeping Russia under its jackboot. This group has been the Frankenstein of Russia. No opposition is possible, no dissent is possible.

Before a man thinks of dissenting, his tongue may be cut; before he thinks of opposing, he himself may disappear from the world. What can the individual do if the entire power is in the hands of the state?

So remember, the power of the state has to be increasingly reduced; in no case should it increase. For, ultimately, we need a society in which the state will be just a functional unit, nothing more. I don't think a food minister of a country should have much importance. How is he important? The family cook has a place in the family -- the same place a food minister has in relation to the country. He is a big cook. If he serves us good food, he should be praised sometimes, but only as much as a cook is praised. Sometimes you may tip him, but only in the way you tip a cook. But the present food minister is not a cook, he is a man of power. He has much power. But he is aware that his power lacks something. It lacks something because people have personal, private property. And private property can rebel. Private property can dissent, resist and fight. The man of property can think, and think freely. The man in power wants to deprive him of it.

The politician is very ambitious. He wants to have all the power in his hands. But when the state usurps both political and economic power, revolution becomes impossible; then there is no way to rebel and revolt. How strange it is that Russia had a revolution, and today Soviet Russia is the one country where revolution is impossible. It is unthinkable to stage another revolution there because the state has at its disposal enormous and unheard of means to suppress its people, to regiment and to control them. Walls have ears, and the tentacles of the state are spread all over. The husband is afraid of his wife. While talking to her he thinks twice if he should tell her what he wants to say, because, who knows? --

she might be a secret agent. The father cannot talk to his son freely because to talk freely is dangerous. Maybe the son belongs to the young communist league, and he may pass the information on to the authorities. Every son is taught it is the nation that matters, not the father or the mother. The husband and the wife are not important. What is important is the society, the state.

Socialism is spreading a very illusory idea that the individual has no value, when in reality, the individual, and only the individual, has value. He is the highest value indeed!

What is the value of society? What is society but an empty word, an abstraction. The individual is real; the individual is concrete. Society is merely a collection of individuals, a conglomeration. But in the great din and bustle of socialism, that which is has no value and that which is not has become valuable. That is why the individual can be sacrificed at the altar of the society. In fact, the individual has forever been sacrificed for gods that do not exist. A god, a goddess, a sacrificial ritual -- anything is good enough to sacrifice him for.

The latest god is the society. And behind the society stands its real god -- the state. The individual can be sacrificed for this super-god. You can massacre the individual because he has no value, he is nothing. It is the group, to the society, that is valuable. But where is the thing called society? I have never come across it. I have searched for it here, there and everywhere. But everywhere I have met the individual and not the society. Wherever you go, you will find the individual. Only the individual is. And he is the ultimate value. And it is dangerous to destroy this value.

Someday socialism will come; it is certain. But it will come, not to finish the individual, but to fulfill him. Beware of the socialism that comes to wipe out the individual. It is not socialism, it is pure and simple murder of the individual.

Behind socialism is the state -- behind socialism is the power-hungry politician. They are afraid of decentralized power, and so they want to have all the power for themselves.

And the last thing that I'd like to say today is that never has the state had as much power as it has now. And it is so because of the tremendous development in technology.

Recently a friend sent me a picture. I was shocked to see that picture; I could not

sleep the whole night. I was much worried. But I wonder if any concern was felt about it in the rest of the world. News about it was printed in newspapers everywhere. A scientist opened the skull of a horse, inserted an electrode into it and then closed the skull. And the horse does not know a thing about it. Now signals can be sent to this horse by radio from places thousands of miles away, and the horse will follow the signals; it will do what it is told to do. The horse will feel that the signals are coming from his own mind. If the scientist, sitting in his laboratory thousands of miles away, signals the horse to lift his leg, the horse will do his bidding. If he is asked to dance, he will dance. The friend sent me the picture of that horse, and he said, "What a great invention!" I sent it back, saying, "It is most unfortunate." Why did I say so? Because sooner or later, the state is going to place this electrode in the brain of man, and he will not know of it. Then rebellion will be impossible.

A chemical revolution is taking place. Such drugs have been discovered that will make it impossible for any revolution to happen. It has been found that a rebel has certain elements, certain chemicals in his system which the non-rebel, the conformist, lacks. And a search iS going on to find out such drugs as LSD, mescaline and other, to finish the rebel in man. Someday, it is just possible a few drops of chemicals will be secretly mixed with the water of your city's reservoir -- from which the whole population gets its water supply -- and without their knowing, they will lose their rebellious spirit, their power to say "No". It is exceedingly dangerous to allow the state to take over absolute power, because it has at its disposal such superior technology that it can wipe out the individual completely

New techniques of brainwashing have been developed and perfected which can erase man's memory. If a man is kept in solitary confinement for six months, his memory can be wiped out with the help of electric shocks, drugs, brainwashing methods and the rest.

If he was a no-sayer, a non-conformist, a rebel, he will forget it all; he will even forget who he was. If he had an ideology, his ideology will be gone. He will fail to say who he was and what his ideology was. He will be like a small child and will have to learn his alphabet once again. He will have to begin from the beginning.

If science is going to put so much power in the hands of the state, and then economic power is also taken over by the same agency, it means that we are

preparing our own funeral.

The politician does not deserve power. The politician is not worth the salt. The truth is that throughout history he has failed to prove his worthiness; he has only shown his unworthiness, utter unworthiness. In fact, the power of the politician should be taken away; there is no need whatsoever to add to it.

The politician also knows that if he says that all power, all property, should belong to the state, people will say no to it. Therefore he wears a different mask and says that all power, all property, should belong to the society. But the society is an abstraction, and so the state appropriates everything in the name of the society. Whatever, today, goes on in the name of socialism is really state capitalism. And I hold that private capitalism is far superior to state capitalism. Why?

Private capitalism is superior because the individual in private capitalism is free. It is superior because every individual has the incentive to produce wealth. It is superior because power is distributed and decentralized. And it is superior because if someday wealth is produced in abundance, socialism will come by itself. Not that it will be forced to come, it will come by itself. It will come, not be made to come. Forced socialism will be dangerous. Let it come on its own. But how will it come?

It will come just like a seed blooms into a flower. It will come naturally and by itself, not forced to come by the gardener. If the gardener uses any force, there is every possibility that the seed itself will disintegrate and disappear. And the flower will remain a distant cry. But then, the question remains: What should be the role of the gardener?

The gardener should prepare the soil, sow the seed, water it, care for it, and protect it from its enemies. Then the seed will sprout, the plant will grow and bear flower and fruit and the rest of it. In the same way, the seed of capitalism has to be cared for, if socialism has to come.

Many people find contradictions in what I say. But what I say is so simple, so clear. I repeat: Socialism will stem from capitalism if the latter is allowed its full growth. But capitalism should go only after it has completed its job. But today, unfortunately, the capitalist himself is gripped with fear. He cannot say with courage that capitalism has a rationale to be, to live. He also says socialism is

right. And there are reasons for it.

The capitalist is afraid. He is afraid of the great crowd all around him. He is scared by the slogans and the flags and the noise raised by the power-hungry politicians. And in panic he says. "Then socialism is right." I see even the biggest capitalist is terrified; he is trembling. He thinks he has committed a sin; he feels guilty. And it is amazing.

Capitalism has provided ways and means to keep such a huge society of men alive. It is thanks to capitalism that, today, three and a half billion men and women are alive on this planet. It is capitalism that created wealth and abolished slavery, and introduced the machine and technology and freed mankind from the drudgery of manual labor. And lastly, socialism is going to come through it. But the tragedy is that the engineer, the architect of that great system, is stricken with fear.

Eisenhower has said that once, while talking to a communist, he was fumbling -- he could not argue with him because he felt that what the communist was saying was right. Even Eisenhower has no arguments. Capitalism has no answer, no philosophy. Then it will die, if it has no answer to communism.

I want capitalism to have its answer. Capitalism should have its own philosophy, so that it lives fully, and in turn, gives birth to socialism. Socialism is the child of capitalism.

And remember, if the mother is sick, the child will not he different; it is bound to be diseased. But the effort is on to bring out the child by killing the mother. It is necessary to beware of these fools who are making such efforts.

In the course of the coming four talks I am going to discuss with you the many sides of this problem. And I would like you to send me your questions. if you have any, in writing, so that I can deal with them at length.

It is a very vital question, and deserves serious consideration. Lots of rethinking is necessary on every side of the problem. The effort is worth it. It is not necessarily so that what I say is right; it may be wrong. So I invite you just to think, and objectively. I don't expect more. If so many of us here think together and have a perspective of socialism, it will help the whole country."

I am grateful to you for listening to my talk with attention and love. And I how

to the God who resides in the hearts of each of you. Please accept my salutations.

Beware of Socialism

Chapter #2

Chapter title: Socialism and self-realization

14 April 1970 pm in Cross Maidan

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A friend has asked:

Question

WE WANT SELF-REALIZATION, AND WHAT YOU SAID LAST EVENING WAS

SOMETHING QUITE DIFFERENT. WHAT HAS IT TO DO WITH SELF-REALIZATION?

It has lots to do with it. It is not possible in today's Russia or China to seek and find what you say you are seeking. Let alone Mahavira, Buddha, Mohammed and Christ, even Karl Marx will not be allowed to be born in these communist countries. Man's search for self-realization needs a climate of freedom. And what you call socialism does not accept that man has a soul. Basically, socialism is a materialist way of life. One of its fundamental tenets says that man is nothing more than matter.

It is necessary to understand this, because the socialism that does not accept

man's soul will be dangerous. Because it will, according to its principles, do everything to suppress and wipe out man's soul if it is there.

The questioner wants to know what connection there is between self-realization and my criticism of socialism.

The connection is deep. In the history of man, socialism has emerged as the most formidable ideology in opposition to what you call self, soul or God. Never in the past had atheism succeeded anywhere in the world, nor had an atheist system, an atheist society or country, been established on this planet. Why? Because the atheists had mounted a direct attack on the existence of God and soul. And they lost the fight, they could not win. But communism has entered this battle from the back door. And for the first time in history the communists have created an atheistic society, an atheistic state.

Charvak and Epicurus could not win. Where all the atheists of the past had lost, Marx, Engels and Lenin won.

What is the secret? The secret is that communism brings atheism in from the back door. It does not oppose religion directly; its direct opposition is mounted against the rich, the capitalist. And then it says that to destroy the rich, it is necessary to destroy religion: the rich cannot be finished unless religion is finished first. Communism also argues that if the affluent has to be liquidated, it is essential to liquidate all the ideologies of the past that have given a foothold to the affluent class. Marx believed that every ideology is class-oriented.

Marxists say that if the rich man talks of religion, it is just because religion shields and protects him. And there is some truth in this matter -- a religion can be used as the rich man's shield. If a thief escapes from the clutches of the police by hiding himself in a temple, then for sure the temple has a hand in protecting him. But this does not mean that the temple is wrong. It is true that the rich have used religion as their shield, but this does not mean that religion is wrong. But the communists use it as a pretext to destroy religion.

Socialism also believes that man is only a by-product of matter . In its view there is no soul, no spirit, nothing beyond matter. It is because of this belief that Stalin could indulge in killing on such a massive scale. If man is only matter, then nothing dies if your throat is cut -- matter does not die. Mao, too, can indulge in killing with ease because man is only matter; there is no soul behind it. It is the

communists who, for the first time, succeeded in killing people without any qualms of conscience. That is just because man's soul has been denied. And constant effort is made to smother the possibilities, the opportunities, for its discovery and growth.

In this connection it is good that we understand a few things. Firstly, for its manifestation, the soul hidden inside a man needs the right opportunity and help. A seed has a tree hidden inside it, but the tree will not appear if you destroy the seed. Undoubtedly the tree is hidden, but to manifest itself it needs so many things -- propel soil, water, sunshine, manure. management. and a loving gardener to care for it. God is hidden in man like a flower is hidden in the seed. But God cannot be found by dissecting a man. Take him to a laboratory, place him on a table and dissect his body, but you will never find God.

I have heard Marx once said as a joke that he would accept God if he was caught in a test tube in a laboratory. And then he said, "But please, don't take your God to the laboratory even by mistake, because what kind of God will he be if he is caught in a test tube?"

No, God cannot be caught in a test tube, because a test tube is too small a thing. We cannot find him by dissecting man's body, but this does not mean that there is no God. If you open my skull and dissect my brain, will you find a thing like "thought" there? But thought is. Similarly you will not find a thing like love if a man's heart is opened and dissected. But love is, though there is nothing to prove it. It cannot be caught in a laboratory. It cannot be found even by dissecting a man's heart, which is its abode. Yet you know that love is. And even if all the scientific laboratories of the world tell you that there is no love. you will not accept their verdict. You will say, "I will not accept it because I myself have known love."

God is an experience, a nd it is beyond matter.

But denial of God is foundational to socialism. And once a society accepts this principle, it will close all avenues that lead to God. How will one sow the seed if he comes to believe that there is nothing like a tree hidden in it? It will be the greatest misfortune of man if it is accepted that there is no God. Then self-realization will be a thing of the past, it will become an impossibility. If people accept that there is no tree in a seed, then who will care to sow it, water it and care for it? The seed will rot and die.

The most dangerous tenet of socialism is its materialism. And remember that socialism will destroy everything -- climate, adventure, opportunity, and freedom -- that is greatly needed for self-realization. At least the socialism that threatens to come right now will certainly do so. Because what is most essential for the socialism of the day is the destruction of human freedom. Without taking away man's freedom it cannot succeed.

And economic freedom -- freedom to pro-duce and own his production -- forms the largest pal t of man's freedom. Really economic freedom is man's basic freedom. And socialism cannot be established right now without depriving man of this freedom. Of course, if capitalism is allowed to grow fully then, and then alone, socialism with freedom will be possible. Then socialism will not need to destroy freedom.

But socialism with freedom calls for abundant wealth, as abundant as water and air. That is the first condition for the socialism that will come naturally, on its own. At the moment, no country in the world, not even America, fulfills the conditions of socialism with freedom. Maybe in fifty years' time America will reach that peak of affluence. But, if we insist, it is only through force that socialism can be imposed. And imposed socialism will mean the death of freedom. And in the absence of freedom the possibility of man's spiritual growth will be dim. Man's spirit needs the open sky of freedom to grow and bloom. And when man's economic freedom is gone, the next assault will be made on his freedom of thought. The partisans of socialism say that if they allow freedom of thought they will not succeed in creating a socialist system. So they cannot accept and ideology that goes against socialism.

It is interesting to note that there exists only one political party in Russia. Is it not amazing that elections are held with a single party in the field? That is why Stalin always won the elections with such a huge number of votes -- as no other person in the world had ever secured. Stalin always won with one hundred percent of the votes. And this fact was announced to the whole world with great fanfare, and great political capital was made out of it. And no one ever asked if he had a contestant in the field. He had no contestant, no rival. What does this mean?

It simply means that there is no freedom of thought in Russia. In the course of the last fifty years of socialism in Russia, very amazing things have happened in that country.

Even scientists are told by the government what to think and what not to think. They are told what scientific theories they have to formulate, and to formulate them according to the tenets of Marxism. If a scientific theory does not accord with Marxism, it is rejected and condemned. Consequently, in the last thirty years, principles of biology were current there that were not valid in any other part of the world. Scientists and research workers all over the world said they were wrong, but they were valid in Russia because Stalin decreed them so. Of course, they became invalid after the death of Stalin. Russian scientists had to say yes to the communist party, had to conform to it, because to stay alive, they were at the mercy of the party.

Before 1917, when the Bolshevik revolution came about, Russia produced some of the most intelligent men of the world -- names worth being written in letters of gold. But after 1917 Russia could not produce a single man of their stature. Not one man of the height of Leo Tolstoy, Maxim Gorky, Lenin, Turgenev, Gogol, Dostoevsky! What is the matter?

It is true that communist Russia produced writers and thinkers who received awards from their government, but not even one among them can come near the grandeur and glory of those whom Russia produced in the days of her utter poverty anc1 degradation, in the worst days of the czars. Russia has yet to produce a thinker as intelligent and as creative as those of the pre-revolutionary times. Why?

It is because the basic requirement of spiritual growth is denied in communist Russia. I,et alone Tolstoy, Turgenev and Dostoevsky, even Lenin is not possible in present-day Russia. If Lenin, his soul, wants to be born again, he will have to go to England or America; he cannot be born in Russia again .

In fact, people who know say that Lenin was poisoned, that he did not die a natural death.

The man who made the revolution and who wanted to turn Russia into a socialist country, was killed. The other man was Trotsky, who came next to Lenin as the architect of the revolution. He had to flee Russia for his life, had to run from one country to another to hide himself: He had left behind in Russia his pet dog -- whom the communists killed in spite -- ,and then they hunted Trotsky down in Mexico and killed him brutally At no time in its history has the human society seen killing on such a massive scale. But it was easy, because there is no soul,

only matter is. So people were killed like flies. It made no difference whether the communists killed their own men or killed rats. It was in accord with their philosophy.

Another logical conclusion that stems from the thinking has no soul is that man has no need of freedom. If socialism succeeds -- the socialism that we know -- it is bound to turn man into a machine. The process is already underway.

In this context I would like to repeat what I said yesterday: that man's bondage will end fully only when the machine will release man from the drudgery of labor. Man will really be free from poverty of every sort when automatic machines will do everything and man will no longer be required to work. One way to it lies through the full development of capitalism but if we are in a hurry to bring socialism right now, Then we have to take the other way, the opposite way, and this will turn men into machines. That is exactly what is happening in Russia and China at the moment. That is the other alternative: turn man into

,a machine. Then he need not think. A machine does not think. And since they believe that man is just body, their argument seems logical: he need not think: what he needs is food for his stomach, clothes for his body and ,a shade over his head. That is all he s.

Have you ever heard ,a socialist say that man needs a soul too. Socialism ends up with three demands of mall: bread, clothes and housing. Man needs nothing more. He need not think at all -- thinking will land him in unnecessary trouble. It is good that he be deprived of the bother; then he will live undisturbed. like an animal lives. He should have plenty to eat and drink, he should be properly clothed, he should have good housing, he should work and live happily. What use is thinking? It only brings worry and trouble of every sort. It even leads to rebellion. The socialist not only says so, he also works to this end --

he creates devices to eliminate thinking. And their best device is this: Before the child begins to think, indoctrinate him with socialist concepts and beliefs so that his mind is in shackles -- heavily conditioned.

Ask a child in Russia, "Is there God?" and he will say immediately, "No, there is no God." A friend of mine visited Russia in 1936. He visited a school and put this question to the children, "Is there God?" Do you know how the children answered him? They said,

"We wonder how a man of your ripe age can ask such a question. Before 1917 there was a God he is now no more. He is not; he was." Children are being taught that there is no God, no soul, no religion, no higher values of life There is only one value in man's life --

if he has plenty of food, clothes and housing, he is satisfied.

A curious sort of caste system has come into being in Russia, as there is in India. There are now two castes there: one, that of the rulers or the managers, and the other of the ruled or the managed. Classes in Russia have not been abolished, they are still there, but they have changed their forms. Here in India, as we say, there are those who exploit and there are others who are exploited. Similarly in Russia there are those who manage and there are others who are managed. Russia is still a class society, not a classless society. A number of people are the managers and the rest of the people are the managed. And the division is clear-cut. In fact, it is wrong to describe them as classes, they are really castes.

There is a difference between class and caste. The class is fluid -- it is easy for one to move from one class to another; and the caste is rigid, fixed -- it is not fluid, resilient. For example, the shudras of India are a caste. Howsoever a shudra tries, he cannot become a brahmin. Whatever he does, he cannot be admitted into the caste of the brahmins. The brahmins are a caste, not a class. And the frontiers of a caste are well-defined, rigidly fixed.

A new caste system is being set up in Russia, as it once happened in India. It has two castes: one of the managers and the other of the managed -- the rulers and the ruled. A member of the managed caste cannot enter the caste of the managers. It is so difficult, there is no way. The manager will not allow him, because he has his own interests, vested interests. Please do not commit the mistake of thinking that Stalin had only as much rights and privileges as the poor worker of Russia has today. And don't think that there is equality in Russia, or for that matter, in China. Mao and his attendants don't have equal rights and privileges.

Equality is just not possible today. Until the time there is an overabundance of wealth, so much wealth that it loses meaning, the classes will remain. Classes will not disappear, they will only change their forms. If ever a classless society comes into being, it will be in a society where wealth will be as plentiful as water and air. As long as wealth is scarce and has value and meaning, as it has

till now, a classless society will remain a dream. The people who will control power and property will become a new class per se.

In my vision, however, class is better than caste. Because caste is rigid, fixed, it has no fluidity. Class is better because it has mobility: a poor man can become rich and a rich man can become poor. The poor and the rich are classes, not castes, and the Russian system is giving rise to castes. There, things are becoming rigid and immobile. And the chasm between the establishment and the rest of the people is so great that it seems impossible to move from one to the other.

But it seems necessary that we examine together the fundamental assumptions of socialism. A friend has asked, DON'T YOU ACCEPT THE BASIC CONCEIT OF

SOCIALISM THAT ALL MEN ARE EQUAL?

Let us consider it. First, all men are not equal and all men cannot be equal. It is not a question of the right of equality. The fact is that all men are not equal and they cannot be.

But I say that there should be equal opportunity of development for all. What does it mean?

It means that every person should have equal opportunity to be unequal. I repeat: Every person should have equal opportunity to be unequal. Everybody has the right to be what he wants to be, and this right to be himself should be equally available to all. And the right to create wealth is one such right. The right to acquire knowledge is another.

Everybody in the world cannot become Einstein, nor can they become Buddha or Mahavira. Rarely is a man born with the genius of Einstein. Similarly, I say, everybody cannot become Ford. But, strangely enough, we do not accept that the capacity to produce wealth is as much inborn as the capacity to produce poetry, mathematics, philosophy and religion. The capacity to produce wealth also comes with birth. A Ford is not made, he is born. Some people are born with the talent to produce wealth and many others are not born with this talent. This is a fact, not a theory. And if we thwart and suppress people born with the talent to produce wealth, if we prevent them from producing wealth, then the world will be the poorer for it; it will never be prosperous. It is like saying that all people

should produce poetry equally, that there is no need for Kalidas or Shakespeare to be at the top, that we cannot tolerate it. We will create a society of classless poetry in which everybody will compose poetry equally In that case it will be a grotesque rhyming of verse; it can never be poetry. Then Kalidas and Shakespeare will not be born. Certainly, everyone can put a few rhymed verses together, but that will not produce Shakespeare or Kalidas. Shakespeare and Kalidas were not rhymsters. Poetry is something very different and rare. Any one of us can daub color on a poster or a canvas, but that will not make of him a Picasso or a Van Gogh. Van Gogh and Picasso are born geniuses.

The fact that socialism does not accept that every person is born different -- he is just like himself and not like everyone else -- is very dangerous. The truth is that every man is unique, peerless and incomparable. It is impossible to find another person matching him in every way. No two persons, not even twins, are alike, the same -- let alone all mankind. It has never happened. And that is why every person has a soul, a higher self.

The soul means the potentiality to be different. Machines can be equal, the same; a hundred thousand Fiat cars coming from the assembly line can be the same, but not two persons. The Fiat car has no soul, it is just a machine. Machines can be equal; only machines can be equal. And if attempts are made to force all men to be equal, it will be possible only by pulling man down to the level of animals. At any level higher than that of the animal, men will remain unequal. So turn man into a machine and he will have equality.

And men will be increasingly unequal as they rise higher and higher spiritually. And they will be increasingly equal as they descend lower and lower. We are all approximately equal at the level of sleep. We are very nearly equal at the level of our hunger and other needs. Everybody needs food, clothes, houses and sex. In these matters we are all equal, even more equal than animals. But as we ascend to the higher levels, which a Buddha, a Kalidas, a Picasso, an Einstein, a Bertrand Russel reach, inequality grows in the same measure. Because as the soul soars high, it is left alone, it is more and more alone. Then a man like Mahavira or Buddha is alone, solitary, rare -- the rarest. Then for millions of years we will not see another like him.

But the crowd, burning with jealousy, can say, "We will not allow it to happen any more; we will make all people equal." And once this madness for equality gets hold of us -- and it is doing so all over the world -- then we will destroy the

glory and the greatness, the grandeur and the splendor that man is heir to. Of course, we will then achieve the leveling of men, the equality of men. Everyone will have food and clothes and jobs and sex. Eat, drink and be merry! -- only on this level of life can equality be achieved. But at what price?

Equality is not possible; it is not even desirable. But equality of opportunity is a must.

Socialism mounts its first and frontal attack on equality of opportunity. Producers of wealth are its first target; they are sorted out and finished first. Its next target is the thinker -- one who is unequal, superior in thinking. The socialist says that we are out to equalize all, so we cannot allow inequality of thought. Now it is so surprising that in the last fifty years there has been no great debate in Russia -- not even one. Fifty years is a long time. The truth is that there is not one idea in man's life over which a debate, a controversy cannot be raised. Every idea is seen from the particular angle of the thinker, and it is not necessary that another person should agree with it. Even the loftiest of thoughts have been opposed, and opposed without fail.

Great debates on ideas, clashes of ideas, ideological upheavals happen in the same measure as man's intelligence grows. But in the last fifty years Russia has not witnessed any great debate, any upsurge of thought, any explosion of ideas, or a cultural revolution that might have stirred the psyche of the country to its roots. Let alone a tidal wave, not even a ripple could rise in these fifty years in the psychic sea of Russia. Why?

If you ask the socialists why, they will simply say, "Because we are engaged in building a socialist society, we cannot allow debates, discussions and oppositions; we cannot tolerate any revolt and rebellion." They also say "Right now we don't have any space for free thinking, we cannot afford it. So we will suppress freedom of thought for the present, but we will certainly allow it when everything is okay."

But then it will be too late. It will be impossible for Russia to think again, and to think boldly, after thinking has been gagged for fifty years. Suppose a man's feet have been in shackles for fifty years and then the man is released one fine morning and told, "Now you are free, so run and climb the mountain." Do you think he can climb the mountain? It will be impossible for him even to walk a few steps inside his own courtyard. Man's mind begins to wither and die if it is

enslaved for a length of time.

To the friend who wants to know what connection there is between my talk about socialism and self-realization, I would say that the greatest danger facing man and his quest for the soul is that the politician all over the world is, by and by, out to concentrate all power -- political and economic -- in the hands of the state, and thereby, he is going to capture and control man's mind and soul. So it is imperative that we think it over, debate it, and raise our voices against it.

When the socialists attack freedom they do it with cunning and tact. Their tactics are appealing. They say they want equality and therefore curbs on freedom become necessary. With freedom, they argue, they cannot achieve equality. Socialists don't talk of freedom, they lay all their emphasis on equality. Equality, for them, comes first; without equality freedom is a myth. And as long as inequality remains, freedom will remain a dream. So equality has to be had first, they argue, even if freedom has to be destroyed for its sake.

Now we have to make our choice. We have to decide clearly which has the highest value, equality or freedom. We have to settle our preference. And all of mankind has to decide, and to decide soon: What is more valued, freedom or equality?

Remember, if freedom lives, it makes it possible for equality to happen in the future. But if we sacrifice freedom for equality, then there is no possibility for regaining freedom in the future. Because once we lose freedom, it will be extremely difficult to regain it.

And this matter called equality is very unscientific and anti-psychological. Men are not equal. And so, if we impose equality on man with force, it will only destroy him. Man should have full opportunity to be unequal and different; he should be free to differ, to dissent, to deny, to rebel. Then only will he grow and blossom and bear fruit.

Socialism today, is the loudest voice against man's spirit, soul, against God and religion.

Another friend has asked:

Question

SOCIALISM WANTS TO DO GOOD TO THE POOR. ARE YOU AGAINST THE

GOOD OF THE POOR?

Me -- against the good of the poor! In fact, no one should go against the good of the poor.

But remember, this talk of serving the poor has been going on for thousands of years --

and innumerable servants of the poor have come and gone -- but up to now they have not done a thing for the poor. But they have done lots for themselves in the name of the poor.

And the poor have remained where they always were. The servants of the poor have nothing to do with the poor, but the poor become their camp followers, because they are told that everything is being done for their sake. And the poor follow them, and even go to the gallows at their behest.

But the people who become martyrs for socialism are not the same as those who grab power in the name of socialism. They are altogether different people. The poor suffer and die for socialism, but those who come to power are not poor. They are a new class of the rich, a new bourgeoisie.

In fact, the man who comes to power gets rich immediately. There is really no difference between man and man. Today he is a partisan of the poor, but tomorrow when he is in power he will have his own vested interests. Now he will want to stay in power, and to do so he will systematically destroy the very ladder with which he reached the top. Who knows? -- by the same ladder others may come to the top and displace him.

The poor have never been served; they have never been helped. Yes, in the name of the poor there have been plenty of movements, plenty of revolutions, and plenty of bloodshed. But they did the poor no good. It is time that we become alert about this whole business. Be alert and aware when somebody tells you that he wants to serve the poor -- for sure, he is a dangerous man. He, too, is going to use the poor as a ladder. And the poor people are foolish; otherwise they would not have been poor. They are poor because of their foolishness. So they will accept him as their new messiah. This is how they get their messiahs again and

again, messiahs U ho exploit them, enslave them, torture them.

Hitler rose to power through "doing good for the poor". Mussolini came to power for "the good of the poor". So did Stalin and Mao. Everybody in the world seems to be busy doing good for the poor, and no good ever happens to them. The poor have remained as poor as ever. Why is it so?

There is a single reason why wealth is less and the number of people very large. As it is, you cannot do a thing for the good of the poor. Put whosoever in the seat of power, and nothing will happen. The real problem is that wealth is much less than the number of people on the earth. We need more wealth, much more. We need to have more wealth than the number of people. We need to have more wealth than the needs of the people.

And the next problem is: How to produce this wealth?

The irony is that the poor people are in opposition to those who can produce more wealth.

The poor are fighting their own benefactors. And this has been an ancient habit with mankind, and it is amazing. Galileo was killed, and yet the whole world today benefits by his discovery. We crucified Jesus, and yet the teachings of Jesus are instrumental in humanizing the world. We poisoned Socrates, and yet Socrates' sayings will continue to guide mankind's spiritual evolution for eternity.

Man is really a strange creature. He can never know who is really working for his good.

His difficulty is that those who shout and scream, professing their concern for the people, come to the forefront, while the real benefactors are doing their work silently, unobtrusively. And we are influenced by propaganda. But I say that the real do-gooders are very different. A scientist doing research in his laboratory is one, but not a politician busy politicking, quibbling and intriguing in Delhi. The politician can do no good, though he is always before the eyes of the people. And the poor man will never know that his child is alive today because some Pasteur found a vaccine in a laboratory. He will never know who saved him when he was stricken with T.B. He will never know the ones who are working strenuously to prolong his life and to find a remedy for cancer and other deadly diseases. The poor man is not grateful to the person who found electricity. But he

knows the politician because he holds a flag in his hand and shouts. In fact, there are a few people who enjoy shouting and make it their business.

I have heard... A boy stood on a pavement and began shouting in a hoarse voice to sell his newspapers. A man became curious and asked him, "What profit do you make? I see you every day, straining your vocal chords so much." The boy said, "I make no profit at all. I buy these papers from the vendor on the opposite side of the street at the rate of ten paise each and sell them for the same price." The man said, "You seem to be crazy! You shout so much for nothing?" The boy said, "No, I am not crazy," which made the man fire another question at him. He asked, "Then for what?" And the boy said, "For the sake of shouting. I enjoy shouting." Then the curious man left, saying, "You will make a good politician."

Who are the people really working for the good of man? They do it very silently; they are not even known. They die for you, but you don't know them. Do you know who the scientist was who died tasting a deadly poison on his own tongue so that you are saved from it? Do you know the names of those who died working on disease-bearing germs so that you remain alive and healthy? You don't know the scientists who are developing automation so that man is saved from the drudgery of labor. But you know the politician who shouts from the rooftops that he is working for your good.

The politicians have done no good. The revolutionaries have done no good. And all revolutions have failed. Not only revolutions that we know have failed to do good, they have definitely done immense harm to the society of homo sapiens. They have obstructed the growth of man; they have impeded the natural flow of life at many points.

Now we need a different revolution -- altogether different from the past revolutions. We need a revolution that will make us forget all other revolutions. We need a revolution that will tell the do-gooders, "For God's sake, leave us to ourselves. Enough is enough. You failed to do us any good for five thousand years; we don't need you anymore. Be quiet!"

The good of the poor depends upon the production of wealth, more wealth. It depends upon the production of such instruments as can increase production a thousand times. The well-being of the poor demands that class conflict be eradicated from the world.

But socialism, every variety of it, thrives on class conflict. Class conflict is the oxygen on which socialists all over the world live. Inciting the poor against the rich, slowing down and stopping production in factories, strikes and bunds and marches have become their stock-in-trade. And the poor are blissfully unaware that through all these strikes and marches they are only adding to their poverty, multiplying their miseries, because they are instrumental in hampering production, in reducing production all around. Is this what you call "the good of the poor"?

If you really want your "good", then forget the politicians and put all your energies into the imperative task of increasing production and adding to the wealth of the society.

Forget the politicians and work hard. Don't impede production by setting one class against another. Class conflict has to go. It is time classes come closer to each other and work unitedly for massive production.

But the politician will lose his business if he promotes friendly relations and understanding among the classes. The political leader lives by inciting conflicts and strife between different groups and classes. Without them he will cease to be. And as long as the leader is alive on this earth, wars will go on. Say good-bye to all your politicians and wars will say goodbye to you. They are the architects of conflict and strife and war. And they depend on them for their very existence.

Hitler has said in his autobiography that if you intend to be a great leader, then you need a great war. And if there is no real war, then a cold war will do. But war is a must, so that people are kept in fear. Because when they are in fear they need a leader to cling to. But when they are free of fear, when they have no worries, then they don't need the politician.

So keep war alive, create new conflicts and wars, and the masses will flock to you and ask you to lead them.

In the twenty years after Indian independence, the politicians prevented the industrialization of India by inciting class conflicts all over. This is the greatest crime they have committed; they have stabbed the country in the back. But the poor will never know that it was especially a stab in their backs.

Another friend has asked,

Question

WHAT YOU SAY GOES IN SUPPORT OF THE CAPITALISTS. WON'T YOU SAY

SOMETHING AGAINST THEM?

Of course, I am going to say a lot against them. And I will have to say it because the capitalists have also played a basic role in creating class conflicts. In fact, the man who becomes wealthy soon begins to think that he belongs to a different world -- different from the rest of the society. This is utterly wrong; no man becomes great by amassing wealth. By amassing wealth no one gets to the top of the world. If a man paints a picture, he does not get to the top of the world. A sculptor does not think that he is great, but a rich man thinks himself to be high and mighty. And as long as a rich man goes on feeding his ego with riches, he will arouse the jealousy of the poor; this is inevitable. I said yesterday that the jealousy of the poor is being aroused and inflamed.

Fifty percent of the responsibility for the poor man's jealousy belongs to poverty; another fifty percent belongs to the ego of the poor man's rich neighbor. The rich man will have to give up his arrogance.

Production of wealth should be his joy. But if he inflates his ego with wealth and thinks himself to be superior to others, to be a demigod, then it is inevitable that the masses around him will do everything to pull him down.

Really, wealth should not become a means to gratify the ego. On the contrary, the more wealth a man has, the more humble and egoless he should be. He should be egoless because he has gone through the abundance of wealth and found that nothing is gained by gaining wealth. Buddha and Mahavira were sons of the rich, but they renounced riches and walked away. Why?

Once Buddha was camping in a village that belonged to some other state than his father's.

The ruler of that state came to see him, and he said, "I have come to remonstrate with you. Are you crazy? Why did you give up your palace, your riches, and the grandeur and glory associated with them? This is crazy! I beseech you to give up this craziness. You marry my daughter, and become heir to my state; my daughter is my only child. Give up the monk's robe and manage the affairs of my

kingdom." Buddha said, "The kingdom that I left behind is larger than yours. Now don't tempt me." Then the king asked, "What is it that made you leave your kingdom?" and

Buddha answered, "I realized that I had everything and yet there was an emptiness inside me which wealth could not fill."

My vision is that it is difficult for a poor man to drop his ego because he does not know that even after having riches one has nothing. But the rich man's ego should go. He alone is truly rich who has come to realize that he has everything -- riches and mansions, cars and everything that riches bring -- yet there is something inside him which is utterly empty. If you fill that emptiness with wealth, you become egoistic, arrogant. And if you see that emptiness with clarity, against the background of riches, then egolessness arises.

If the rich man gives up his ego, it will be easier for the poor to shed his jealousy. But if the rich remain abundantly egoistic and arrogant, then the poor are left with nothing but Jealousy and bitterness to nurse.

The arrogance of the rich provides an opportunity to the politician to fan the jealousy of the poor. And when the politician does so, the rich man becomes more arrogant in defense. He seeks to defend his ego, what he calls his prestige, in various ways. But these ways are dangerous; they only add fuel to the fire.

No, if the country has to be rich, it is urgent that class conflict be reduced and eliminated.

And this is the responsibility of the rich -- much more than that of the poor, because the poor man's jealousy is very natural while it is unnatural on the part of the rich to be egoistic. While the poor man's jealousy is real, the ego of the rich is irrational and unreal.

I remember a small story. There is a hospital inside a jail with a hundred beds where sick prisoners are kept for treatment. Like the prisoners, their beds are also numbered. The number one bed is allotted to the prisoner who is a little hefty and enjoys the favor of the jail authorities. The second bed goes to one with less influence with the authorities. The prisoner on bed number one hundred thinks himself to be a nobody, a nonentity.

The man on bed number one is chained to his cot like the others, but he has an

air of arrogance about him, the arrogance of being somebody. His bed is close to the window.

Rising from his bed every morning he looks out and says, "What a beautiful morning!"

And all the other prisoners feel humbled before him. They think him to be the most fortunate man and feel jealous of him. And the prisoner in bed number one goes on talking. Sometimes he praises the grandeur of the full moon in the sky, at other times he describes the beauty and smell of the various flowers.

By and by the number one bed becomes the most coveted bed of the hospital, the object of ninety-nine prisoners' desires and dreams. The fellow prisoners tell the occupant of the number one bed, "You are the most fortunate one among us; you must have earned it in your previous lives," but in their heart of hearts they pray for his death. And whenever he has a heart attack -- occupants of bed number one often suffer from heart troubles -- it sends a wave of joy among his fellow prisoners and they begin to look forward to the time when he will die. But he survives, because people like him die with difficulty. And when he is a little better, he begins again his hymns of praise to the splendor of the world beyond the window.

At long last the prisoner in bed number one dies.

His death sends a wave of joy among the ninety-nine prisoners, each of whom aspires for his bed. A contest starts -- as it happens in Delhi after the death of the "number one" man.

A mad race is on. They flatter the officials of the jail to win their favor. They even bribe them. And ultimately the prisoner offering the largest bribe wins the race. The winner is overjoyed and soon occupies the coveted bed. And the first thing he does after occupying it is to inspect his state and surroundings. This is what one does after becoming the president of the country. As the new occupant looks out the window, all his joys vanish into thin air. He is utterly disappointed to see that there is nothing except the massive outer wall of the prison. There is no sky, no sunrise, no flowers, no song of the birds --

nothing of those joys that his predecessor had gleefully talked about for years. And now he is in great difficulty -- how to say that there is nothing? And do you know what he said to his fellow prisoners?

He said, "Hey guys, how fortunate I am! The sun is rising, the flowers are blooming and the birds are singing." And again the rest of the prisoners say outwardly, "How fortunate you are," and secretly pray for his death as well.

I have also heard that this hospital has been there for hundreds of years, and for hundreds of years the same drama is being played again and again. And up to now no prisoner in bed number one has gathered enough courage to say the truth.

The man getting to the top of the ladder of wealth should gather courage to say that though he has amassed wealth, he has not found his soul, he has not known the truth, he has not experienced love. In fact, he should realize the utter poverty of his being and say it. Then he will cease to be the pillar of ego that he is -- and, with the cessation of ego, he will also cease to inflame the jealousy of the poor. If class conflict has to be removed, the rich man will have to drop his arrogance and come down from his imaginary height.

Man does not become great because of wealth. A clerk in an office is not small because he is a clerk. To be really human is altogether different. It comes with the richness of being, which has nothing to do with outer richness. And the man who has no respect for this inner richness harms the society in many ways. The rich man should know that wealth does not make for inner richness. He should also know that God resides within the poor too. He has not to look down upon the poor man as if he is an animal. Only then we will extinguish the fire of class conflict. And this fire can be extinguished. And the country can engage itself in creativity, in the production of wealth, only if class conflict disappears.

A friend has asked,

Question

HOW IS IT THAT INDIA COULD NOT PRODUCE WEALTH?

There are reasons for it. And I would like to go into a few of them. The first reason is that we, as a people, are anti-wealth. It must have been a most unfortunate moment in our long past when we decided to go against wealth. For thousands of years we have respected poverty, even deified it. And we also respect the poor. Perhaps the reason was that we were very poor, and because of our envy of the rich we began to respect the poor.

If I am a beggar and there is no way whatsoever to be a king, then as a last measure, my mind may say that I am happy being a beggar, that I would never, like to be a king. This would be the last device of the poor man's ego.

India has remained poor for thousands of years. Our poverty has been so long that it became necessary to find a way to gratify our ego even in the midst of poverty. And we found it at last: we gave poverty many good names. We said, "It is simplicity, non-acquisitiveness, renunciation," and the rest of it. And if some wealthy person embraced poverty voluntarily, we bowed down to him, we touched his feet. All the twenty-four teerthankaras of Jainism were sons of kings. Why could not a poor man's son be accepted as a teerthankara?

There is a reason for it. The poor man has nothing to renounce, and we measure a man's greatness by what he renounces. Really, wealth is our measure, whether one amasses it or renounces it. Mahavira is great because he renounced a huge amount of wealth. Buddha is great because he renounced his riches. No one would have cared to take note of him if he had been born in a poor family. We would have asked, "How much gold, how many palaces, elephants and horses did you renounce?" And he would have said, "None, because I had nothing." How could one be a teerthankara if he had no wealth? To be a teerthankara, one needs to be a millionaire. We measure everything with money. Poor people measure everything with money. We measure one's wealth by the amount of wealth one has; we measure renunciation by the amount of wealth one gives up.

Once I visited Jaipur. A man came to me and said, "There is a great sannyasin here; you must see him. He is an extraordinary sannyasin." I asked, "How did you find out that he is a great sannyasin?" And he answered, "The king of Jaipur himself touches his feet." I told the man, "You respect the king of Jaipur, and not the sannyasin. What would you say if the king refused to touch his feet?"

On another occasion I happened to be the guest of a sannyasin. In the course of our talks, every now and then he said that he had renounced wealth worth hundreds of thousands of rupees. Once I asked him, "Can you tell me about the time when you renounced so much wealth?" And he said, "Almost thirty years ago." Then I said, "Your renunciation did not click, because you remember it even after the lapse of thirty years. You are still enjoying the wealth. Once your ego thrived on its possession, now it thrives on its renunciation.

But in each case wealth remains the basis."

A poor man's measure is wealth.

But it was most unfortunate that we accepted poverty and thought that it was a blessing.

We said that contentment was of the highest. And that is why we failed to produce wealth, and we remained poor.

Now in order to produce wealth we have to stop respecting poverty. We have to stop calling the poor by the name of daidranarain, saying the poor are God. We have had enough of this nonsense. The poor are not God, and poverty is not a virtue. Poverty is a great disease, a curse, a scourge. It is like a plague, and it has to be destroyed, and wealth has to be respected. We will produce wealth only if we respect it.

We create what we desire, intensely desire to create. We created poverty because we accepted it. If somebody asked Gandhi why he traveled in a third-class compartment, he used to say, "Because there is no fourth class on the railway trains." If there had been a fourth class Gandhi would have traveled in that class saying, "I travel in the fourth because there is no fifth class on the train." Now Gandhi would not he contented until he traveled in the train of hell itself. We say that Gandhi was a mahatma, a great soul, a saint, because he accepted the third class.

Because we all, being poor, travel in the third, we think of Gandhi as the real mahatma.

Really, we are sick of traveling third class; we would travel by first class if w e could afford it . But that is not possible, so we have to lend respectability to the third class by honoring one who travels by it. Third class is now sought. It is turned into an object of our respect; it is made important -- and it gratifies our ego.

This false and senseless gratification of ego has ruined this country. It is time for it to go.

We need wealth. Wealth is not everything, but it is certainly something. Self-realization is not possible through wealth, but it is also true that without wealth self-realization is more difficult to attain. There is at least one great value in wealth: it helps us to forget our bodies, bodily needs. Bread serves one great

purpose: we are freed from our bodily concerns. In hunger it is difficult to forget the body. If I have a headache, I cannot forget my head, but with the headache gone I forget it completely. If I have a thorn in my foot, my whole mind enters and lives around the paining foot. With the thorn taken out, the mind leaves the foot, it becomes free, carefree. Where there is a want, there is a sore. It hurts and haunts us. The poor man lives in his body, he lives on the level of the body; he cannot think beyond it. The rich man has an advantage: he can forget his body.

That is why I feel that the whole world should be made prosperous and rich, so that every person can rise above his body. And the day we forget the body, we begin to take care of our soul. When the needs of the body are fulfilled, then the question arises: What next?

What to seek next? The search for religion and God arises after all the physical needs of man have been satisfied. It is the last luxury. When you have all the good things of this world, the ultimate journey begins.

So now we have to change all our old choices; they were illusory, ill-conceived and wrong.

There is yet another important matter to consider. Our acceptance of poverty has one other reason: We believe that a man is poor because of his past sins, the sins of his past lives. This was also a device of consolation. We said that the rich were rich because they had earned merits in past lives, and the poor were poor because of their past sins. This fatalist thinking again provided us with consolation. And it made poverty and misery bearable. But it also made it impossible to end poverty.

Poverty is not the result of any mistakes that we made in our past lives, it is the result of the mistakes made in the present life itself. If what we do in this life fails to produce wealth, then poverty is inevitable.

And secondly, poverty is not only the result of our individual ways of life, it is also the cumulative effect of our group or collective life and its inner organization.

If we understand two things -- fallacies of past karmas and individual ways of life -- then we can get rid of our age-old poverty.

As long as we believed that the lifespan of a man was determined by fate, we

could not increase our longevity. But the same lifespan increased considerably when our belief in fate declined. There was a strange custom in Tibet. When a child was born, he was dipped in ice-cold water and then taken out. This ritual was repeated several times, as a result of which seven out of ten children died only three survived. The people of Tibet believed that of the ten, seven died because they were destined to die, and three lived because they were destined to live. And they thought that this ritual was just a way of testing the fate of the children. This custom continued for centuries, and as a result, millions of children lost their lives.

It is wrong to conclude from the history of the Tibetan custom that if these millions of children had been spared this ordeal they would yet have died because they were destined to die. It simply shows that their resistance was low. But resistance could have been improved. But the Tibetans opted for killing them.

Our lifespan increased when we realized that longevity was not determined by fate. We now live much longer.

In the same way, we believed that diseases were caused by principles of karma, and so we did not do anything to fight or eradicate disease. However, when we dropped this belief, the situation changed radically. Now any number of diseases have disappeared, and a time will come when they will disappear altogether.

We are poor because we have decided to be so, and poverty can end only when we reject it with all our heart and mind. And if the whole country so decides and says goodbye to poverty, there will be no difficulty whatsoever. But the will to end poverty should come first -- the ending will follow inevitably.

Now the poor man is taught new stupidities, new superstitions in place of the old ones.

He is being ceaselessly harangued that he is poor because he is exploited by the rich, and that in order to liquidate poverty the exploiter has to be liquidated first. This is an utterly senseless argument. Liquidation of the so-called exploiter will never end poverty.

Another friend has asked,

Question

YOU ARE WRONG IN SAYING THAT THE POOR MAN IS NOT EXPLOITED.

WHY IS HE PAID BY THE EMPLOYER ONLY TWO RUPEES FOR WORK

WORTH TEN?

I ask this friend what will happen if this poor man refuses to work for two rupees? And then let him try to sell his ten rupees worth of labor for ten, not less. Where will he get this amount? Maybe he will fail to earn even two paise if he refuses to work for two rupees. And how did you determine the worth of his labor to be ten? Do you know how wages, the price of labor are determined?

Marx preached a strange theory that the worker is paid much less than the real value of his labor. But the question is that if the worker refuses to work for two rupees, is he going to be employed elsewhere for more? It is true that search for wages higher than the current ones should be undertaken. So also for higher production. But if we think in terms of the exploited and the exploiter, we will only create a wall of enmity between the poor and the rich, and the country will suffer. It will never attain prosperity if the institution of production is turned into an institution of conflict, strife and enmity.

So, it has to be an institution of friendship and cooperation. The worker and employer have to work with understanding and in cooperation. The worker should know that it is not a question of exploitation, it is a question of increasing production and productivity.

And the employer should know that it is not merely a matter of earning profits, but a question of investing them in further production. And if this twin understanding happens, the country will attain affluence unfailingly.

But if what the socialists say is accepted, the country will go to the wall, because after twenty years we will be poorer than we are today. Socialists give no thought to the matter of production, their sole concern is distribution of wealth. And this thing appeals to the poor -- that he will share the wealth of the rich for nothing. He is poor because he lacks the will to work, to create, to produce. So what more could he desire if wealth comes free of charge? And he joins the chorus: "Stop all work and march! We demand distribution of wealth!"

If this mad wish takes a firm hold on the country's poor, it means that India has

finally decided to remain poor forever. Then riddance from poverty would be simply impossible.

And now the last thing... There remain a number of questions to be answered; I will answer them tomorrow. A friend wants to know if I am paid by the capitalists for supporting them.

No payment so far, but if there is a suggestion please bring it to me. It is strange, the whole pattern of our thinking is such. When I speak in favor of socialism I receive letters saying that I am Mao's agent and paid by China. And when I criticize socialism they say I am in the pay of America and I am an agent of American capital.

Is it a crime to think? Do only agents think, and no one else? I wonder if the questioner himself is connected with some agency. If not why this question?

We cannot imagine that one can think independently. We say one must be an agent. This means that man does not have a soul of his own and he cannot think on his own.

Another friend says that as I sometimes speak in support of socialism and again against it, I create confusion.

In reality our problem is different. We treat socialism and capitalism as contradictory to each other. This is a very wrong assessment Socialism is nothing more than the developed stage of capitalism; they are not opposite. So, when I speak in support of socialism, I speak about the end, the goal. And when I support capitalism, I speak about the means, the process. There is no contradiction whatsoever. But because we are in the habit of thinking in terms of enmity, we cannot think in any other manner. We have been trained to think in terms of conflict, not cooperation. The political leader knows only the language of conflict.

But I am not a leader. To me it seems that socialism is the end, and capitalism the means.

And that is why I am in favor of socialism and I am not opposed to capitalism. This has to be understood very clearly.

Any number of friends have written to me that I say things that are very

inconsistent, that sometimes I say one thing and at other times its very opposite. This charge is again wrong.

You were young yesterday, and today you are an old man. If someone tells you that you are very inconsistent -- once you were a child, then young and now you are old -- what would you say to him? You will say that it is not inconsistent, it is growth. Childhood leads to youth, and youth in its turn leads to old age. In the same way capitalism will lead to socialism, socialism to communism and communism to anarchism. The day communism will have been established rightly, there will be no need of the state. But these are the gradual processes of social growth; they are not contradictory at all.

I am not inconsistent. Whatever I say is relevant, and that is why I say it. In my view, socialism will not come through those who talk of it -- the demagogues. There is every possibility that they will impede it, prevent it. They may succeed in subverting and sabotaging the system of capital formation, and consequently prevent the advent of socialism in India. But nobody can think that Tatas and Birlas are going to bring socialism here. I say to you, Tatas and Birlas are doing exactly that. I mean to say that if the wealth that they are engaged in producing becomes massive and abundant, then it is bound to culminate in socialism, and in no other way. It is inevitable. And then socialism will be a very natural consequence of capitalism.

But Karl Marx thought in terms of thesis and antithesis. He thought in terms of conflict and struggle and the revolution of the proletariat. And his followers are conditioned by his teachings. Marx had no concept of evolution. This is the basic weakness of his philosophy. But evolution is the fundamental law of life and its basic function. And revolution becomes necessary only when the evolutionary process is blocked. Revolution should not step in where evolution itself has not happened. As I said yesterday, it would be wrong if a childbirth is forced much before the child has completed nine months in the mother's womb. It would be dangerous. The child will die; even the mother may die. And if the child survives, it would be as good as dead.

It is also possible that childbirth does not take place even after completion of the pregnancy, and a Caesarian section becomes unavoidable. In the same way, if the evolutionary process is impeded, revolution will become necessary. Revolution will be needed to remove the impediment. If America does not become socialist after fifty years, a revolution can be needed there. But it was not necessary for

Russia and China, and it is not needed in India yet. It is unfortunate that revolutions are taking place where they were not needed at all.

Lenin had predicted that the road of communism to London lies through Moscow, Peking and Calcutta. It was a dangerous prophecy which seems to be coming true. Already there is a paved road from Moscow to Peking, and footpaths between Peking and Calcutta have become visible. Nobody can say that Lenin's prediction will really come true. But in case it comes true, it will be most unfortunate for Asia and the world. There is yet time to remove the footpaths because they are in their rudimentary stage. But how can it be done in the absence of a definite vision and goal?

The irony is that while socialism has a movement and a philosophy, capitalism has none.

Capitalism has no philosophy of its own. That is why it cannot take a bold stand. it is always on the defensive. And if it does not change its posture, its stance, it is going to die.

Its being on the defensive means that it accepts defeat. A person or a system, if it wants to win, must not be on the defensive. But capitalism is committing the same mistake.

Capitalism says, "It does not matter if Calcutta is lost, we will take care of Bombay." And if tomorrow Bombay is lost, they will take care of Delhi. This is the certain way of retreat and ultimate defeat.

So, this will not do. When a movement is based on jealousy, hatred and violence, it gathers much fire and goes on spreading like wildfire. A great force of thought. ideology and philosophy is needed to counteract and defeat it. And I say, it is possible to build that force. As I see it. capitalism is dying for want of argument, for want of philosophy. It is not able to argue its case, and it is afraid of appearing in court because it cannot produce evidence in its favor. A single party is present in the court and getting away with a default judgment.

Capitalism must present its case, Its philosophy. It should announce in clear terms that we are part of socialism. part of its development. Socialism is not the first, but the last stage of capitalism. And when capitalism presents its case well, we will drive away communism not only from Calcutta and Peking, but from Moscow itself. That is not so difficult.

There is great unrest in Russia at the moment. It is seething with discontent, stress and strain. Its youth are in foment, but they are not in a position to rebel. They don't have the wherewithal, the necessary ideology. That ideology, that rebellion. has to reach Russia too. America also suffers from the same deficiency -- it does not have an aggressive ideology. America is also on the defensive, and that is why it is in difficulty. But I think socialism will not reach London via Moscow, Peking and Calcutta. If socialism has to spread in the world, its headquarters will be Washington. Socialism via Washington.

There can be no other way.

And if socialism goes all over the world via Washington, it will be natural, healthy and happy.

If you have any questions, please give them in writing and we will discuss them together.

I am grateful to you for having listened to me with such love and attention. I salute the God residing in each of you. Please accept my salutations.

Beware of Socialism

Chapter #3

Chapter title: No going back to the past

15 April 1970 pm in Cross Maidan

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A friend has a question, and there are a few more questions to the same effect. The friend has asked, HOW IS IT THAT YOU SUPPORT CAPITALISM WHICH IS BASED ON

SELFISHNESS?

A few things have to be understood in this connection. Firstly, down the ages we have been taught many wrong things, and among them, one is that it is wrong to live for oneself. In fact, man is born to live for himself, but he is taught to live for others, and not for himself. The father should live for his son, and the son, in his turn, should live for his son. This means that neither the father nor the son can really live. They say, "Live for the society, live for the nation, live for humanity, live for God, live for salvation, but please, never commit the mistake of living for yourself."

This thing has been so incessantly preached that it has sunk deep into our consciousness, and we really believe that it is a sin to live for oneself. But the truth is that if a person has to live, he can only live for himself, and for no one else. And if living for others happens, it is just the consequence of living very deeply for oneself; it iS Just Its fragrance.

No one in the world can live for the other; it is just impossible. A mother does not live for her son; she lives for the joy of being a mother. And if she dies for her son, it is really her own joy. The son is an excuse. If you see a man drowning and you jump into the river to save him, you might say to others that you risked your life to save another man's life, but it would be a wrong statement on your part. The truth is that you could not bear to see the man dying, which was your own pain. And to rid yourself of this pain you jumped into the river and saved him. You had nothing to do with the other really. Would you have saved him if you had not suffered pain? There were many others on the bank of the river too; they felt no pain and they did not do a thing. Whenever a man saves another man from drowning, he really does so to save himself from pain, because he cannot bear to see him dying. Deep down he is saving himself from pain and sorrow.

A man serves the poor because he cannot hear to .see them suffer. So, he is wrong if he says that he serves the poor. The poverty of another man hecomes his own sorrow and he does something to alleviate it. He just cannot live with

this sorrow, and so he serves the poor. Till now no man has lived for another man; each man lives for himself.

But you can live for yourself in two ways. You can live in a way that harms others; you can live by injuring and killing others. And you can live in a way that helps others to live and grow too. But the talk of altruism, of the service of others, is dangerous. When we ask someone to live for others, we really ask him to live a life that is unnatural and unhealthy.

I have heard that a father was once teaching his son the purpose of life. Many times teachings like this have proven to be dangerous. He said to his son, "God has made you for the service of others." The son, if he was like the sons of olden times, would have taken to serving others as asked by his father -- but he belonged to the new age, and he said, "I take it that God made me for the service of others, but why do you think he made the others? Just to be served by me? Then God has been unjust to me. And if he made me to serve others and made the others to serve me, then God seems to be very confused.

Instead of this complex arrangement he could have laid a very simple rule: 'Let each live for himself.'"

And remember, when somebody serves others he always does so with a motive. Service is a bait with which he dominates others. Really, he begins with service and ends with lordship. Beware of one who professes to serve you. He is certainly going to ask the price. He will say, "I served you; I sacrificed everything for you." A mother who tells her child that she sacrificed everything for him is going to cripple the child, even ruin him.

And a father who says so to his son will possess and dominate him all his life. It is just natural. It is natural that he will ask for the price of his services.

But I say that a mother is not a mother who tells her child that she suffered and sacrificed for him. She may have been a nurse, but not a mother. Really, she has not known what motherhood is. Caring for the child is the joy of motherhood; it is its own reward. It has nothing to do with the child. If she had no child, she would have shed tears for the rest of her life; she would have thought her life to be a waste.

It is in the very nature of man, in his innate nature, to live for himself. But this simple and clean truth could not be accepted -- we condemned it; we called it

selfishness. But selfishness is natural and therefore right; it is not unnatural. It is unnatural only if I live at the cost of others, if I injure others for my sake. So a society should not be so organized that we ask everyone to live for the society, to sacrifice for the society. It should be such as allows every member to live for his sake, and the law or the state should intervene only when one hurts the interests of others.

But the so-called socialist or communist ideology believes that the individual has to be sacrificed at the altar of the collective, the society. For them, society is the end, and the individual has to live for the society. Whenever such goals are set, the individual is disarmed, he becomes helpless. He says, "What can I do? The society is so big that I have to submit to it, to sacrifice for it." So much bloodshed and killing in human history were the results of this thinking. Someone is dying for Islam, and someone else is killing for Islam. They say, "If you die for Islam, your heaven is guaranteed. Don't live for yourself, live for Islam." Someone else says that you have to live for Hinduism, and not for yourself. You have to live for the temple, for the idol in the temple -- you have to die for the sake of the idols. Again, someone says that you have to live for the sake of India, or for the sake of Pakistan or China, or for the sake of socialism.

But no one says that everybody should live for himself, which is so natural and simple.

We let go of natural and simple truths; we forget them altogether. The truth is that every man can live only for himself. And if we force him to do otherwise, he will turn into a hypocrite. That is why people who take to the service of others, necessarily, unavoidably become hypocrites. Because while they live for themselves, they have to show that they are living for others. Thus they live a double life; they are one thing inwardly, and quite another outwardly. That is inevitable

The politician claims that he is dying for the nation, when in reality he is dying for his chair, for his position. The chair has become synonymous with the nation. If his chair is lost he would not care a bit for the nation; he would let it go to hell. Similarly the priest proclaims that he is dying for God and religion, when in reality he is dying for his position in the church; he is dying for his ego.

But we are not prepared to accept this simple truth. And that is why hypocrisy enters our life and corrodes it. And because of hypocrisy and its thousand and

one tentacles, life moves onto wrong tracks and becomes hellish.

I say to you that to be selfish is to be healthy. There is nothing sinful about it. In my vision, men like Mahavira, Buddha and Christ are the most selfish men on this earth.

Why? -- because they live purely for themselves, seeking their self, their soul, their bliss, their freedom, their God. And, curiously enough, they happen to be the most altruistic people who walked this planet. The reason is that when a man discovers himself and finds his enlightenment and bliss, he immediately begins to share it with others. He is now on a new journey -- a journey of sharing his joy, his benediction. What else can he do? When clouds are full they rain; when bliss is full it overflows, it shares itself with others.

And this too, is selfishness.

The same is true with misery. When a man is full of misery, he shares it by hurting others. These are the martyr-like people abounding all over in the form of parents, teachers, politicians, saints, gurus and mahatmas. They are trying to live for others, and they are very dangerous people. In the first place, they themselves fail to grow and bloom; they remain stunted and they are increasingly miserable. And the more miserable they are, the more they serve you. And then they ask for their return, for the price of their services. So by way of serving you they dominate you, they strangle you. That is the price you pay for their services.

The people who served this country until 1947 are now out collecting their rewards. They have been in jails and now they are asking for the presidency of the country as their price.

Nobody tells them that it was their pleasure that they courted imprisonment and that they enjoyed it. Nobody had promised the presidency in return for going to jail. They fought for the country's freedom; it was their own choosing. Nobody had forced them to do it.

But now they are trying to dominate us, to rule over us forever. They say that we have to honor them for their services, that we have to pay them back.

Every servant demands his price. And nobody knows when a servant will turn into a boss. The servant is already preparing to be a boss; service is only a means

to this end.

He alone truly serves others who is supremely selfish. And to be so selfish means that he is seeking his own highest good, his own benediction. And the day he attains it, its fragrance, its joy begins irresistibly to reach others. He is fulfilled, he is overflowing with bliss, and he cannot but share it. But then this man knows that whatever he is doing is again for his own joy. He does not even expect a "thank you" in return.

Buddha visited a village. The people of the village said, "We are grateful to you for coming to us and sharing your wisdom with us. It is your compassion that you traveled such a long distance for our sake." Buddha said, "Please don't say so. In fact, I am grateful to you for kindly coming to listen to me. I am fulfilled, I am overflowing with bliss, and I want to share it with you. If you had not come, I would have gone calling you from house to house. I am like a cloud in search of parched land where it can rain; I am like a river in search of the sea to pour itself into; I am like the flower in full bloom scattering its fragrance in all directions. I am thankful to you for having come to me so I can give of myself to you."

Those who know, know well that service of others is also an act of deep, profound selfishness. Service is the joy of the servant himself, and this joy can be possible only if we accept selfishness, not condemn it.

The capitalist system is the most natural system where nobody is called upon to sacrifice himself for another. Everybody lives for himself, in search of life. And through this search he will certainly live for others too, because nobody can live alone and by himself.

To live means living in relationship. Life is relationship. If all of us seek our happiness and bliss, if a thousand persons sitting here find their happiness, then we are going to have happiness a thousandfold. And we will have to share it; it will go on spreading.

There is no other way. On the other hand, if each of us lives for others, if each is made to sacrifice himself for others, then all of us will be left with nothing but piles of misery; there will be not one iota of happiness to share.

To the friend who says that the world is in a mess on account of selfishness, I would like to say that he is mistaken to think so. It is not because of selfishness

but because of the unnatural and unscientific teaching of altruism, of service to others, that the world is in a mess. It is enough if you find your own happiness, which is natural and easy. If you do this much in one lifetime -- between birth and death, you find your own bliss -- the world will be grateful to you. Because the man who finds his happiness ceases to hurt others, to cause unhappiness to others. Why?

The man who knows that he wants to be happy also knows that it is impossible to be happy by hurting others. The man who knows that if he hurts others he will lose his own happiness, also knows that if he makes others happy his own happiness will multiply.

This is the simple arithmetic of life. And the day a man sees the truth of it, a revolution happens in his life: he is transformed.

But the religions of the world teach renunciation. They ask you to renounce, to sacrifice, and not to be selfish. The Sanskrit word for selfishness is swartha and it is beautiful.

Swartha means "that which is meaningful for the self". Swa means the self, the soul, and artha means meaning.

How is it necessary that what is in my interests should go against your interests? If you go deeper and deeper you will find that what is good for you cannot go against the good of others. Because deep down, at the level of being, we are all united and one. It is impossible that what is good for me should be basically bad for you. And the contrary is also true -- what is harmful for you would be the same for me.

I had been to a mountain which had an echo point. Whatever sound one makes there, the whole mountain echoes it. One of the friends with me knew how to imitate the sounds of different animals. He barked like a dog and soon the mountain was resounding with the bark of a dog. And it seemed that a thousand dogs were barking, and that they were all over the place. I said to the friend, "Do you see it? You produced the sound of a single dog, and it was magnified into that of a thousand dogs -- as if we are surrounded by dogs and only dogs. On account of your own small dog's voice you are now surrounded by the uproar of a thousand dogs. How beautiful it would be if you now speak in the voice of a cuckoo."

The friend knew how, and he called like a cuckoo. And now the mountain was filled with the sweet melody of a thousand cuckoos, resounding beautifully all over the place.

This incident made the friend silent and pensive, and he retired to a secluded place. He came back to me after a while and said. "It seems to me that you had devised a message for me through this incident." Agreeing with him, I asked. "Can you tell me what the message was?"

He then said. "It appears that this mountain with an echo point is symbolic of man's life.

What we say or do here returns to us a thousandfold. If we bark like a dog we will be surrounded by a thousand barking dogs. If we hurt others the hurt will return to us multiplied by a thousand. If we treat the world with anger, hate and violence, the same hate and violence will come back to us, magnified greatly. The old dictum is true that if we sow the seeds of the thorn, we will have to reap a whole harvest of thorns alone. In the same way, if we share our love and bliss with others it will return to us a thousandfold. Life is really an echo point."

That is why I say that I am not against selfishness. If you can find your swartha -- the meaning of your self -- you will do so much good to the world, good you cannot do in any other way.

For this very reason I am not opposed to the system of capitalism -- which is based on selfishness. Rather. I support it fully. It is this selfish system which will gradually develop into a socialist system. My vision is that if everybody pursues his self interests, we will, sooner or later, come to realize that we unnecessarily come in the way of the interests of others, and then we will cease to do so. If all of you can multiply your selfishness -- your self interest, your happiness -- a thousand times, then humanity is destined to achieve socialism. It will come, not through the conflict of self-interests. but through cooperation of self-interests.

Another friend has asked, CAPITALISM IS FULL OF CORRUPTION AND BLACK

MARKETING. WHAT HAVE YOU TO SAY ABOUT IT?

Capitalism is not the cause of black markets and corruption. Scarcity of capital is the cause. When there is a shortage of wealth we cannot prevent corruption.

Where the population is large and wealth scarce, people find ways and means to own wealth; they care little for the right ways and means. If you want to do away with corruption, then stop worrying about corruption, because corruption is a byproduct. We have nothing to do with it. But all the politicians, all the saints, are busy fighting corruption. They say, "We are determined to end corruption." But the real problem is different -- it is lack of wealth.

Corruption is the natural consequence of poverty. If there are a thousand persons here and there is food enough only for ten, do you think there will be no attempts at procuring food through stealing?

Dr. Frankel has written a small book of his memoirs. Dr. Frankel was a psychologist who was thrown into one of Hitler's concentration camps. Mind you, Hitler was a socialist. Dr.

Frankel says in his memoirs that it was in that prison camp that he came to see the real face of man. The prisoners were given only one meal in twenty-four hours, and that too was very meager. They were almost being starved. Dr. Frankel says that he saw people known as great poets, writers, physicians and engineers, stealing pieces of bread from the bags of their fellow prisoners during the nighttime. Among them were men highly respected for their character and moral values, men who held high offices like that of the mayor of a city, and they were seen begging for a cigarette on bended knees -- and unashamedly. And none of them thought that he was doing anything wrong.

Writing about himself, the famous psychologist says that the bread he was given was so little that it never satiated his hunger; he was always in a state a semi-starvation. So he broke the bread into a number of small pieces to be eaten at small intervals of time so they would last for twenty-four hours. And he found that day in and day out he only thought of bread and nothing else. He forgot all about God and soul, consciousness and unconsciousness, analysis and psychology, and the rest of it -- which had been the most significant things of his life. In Hitler's concentration camp he realized that bread was everything and nothing else mattered. Frankel also admits that he was not sure that if given the opportunity he would not have stolen another's bread.

Bribery, corruption and black marketing only prove the fact that there are too many people and too little goods. We refuse to understand this simple fact. Corruption is not a disease, it is just a symptom of a disease which is deep-

rooted. When a man has a fever, it is said that he is "down with fever". Fever itself is taken for the disease. But in reality fever is a symptom, an indication of some deep disorder in the physiology of the man who is running a temperature. Similarly, corruption is a symptom of a social disease --

poverty. But the politician and the priest believe that corruption can be ended without caring for production and population control. They say that God is sending more and more men to this earth. If God is responsible for our increasing population, then he is the most corrupting factor today, because corruption grows with the growing population. We have to restrict, even to stop this ever-flowing gift of God. We have to tell him, "Enough is enough; we don't need more men. And if you send more, then give to each one of them ten acres of land and a factory to work with."

People are not immoral, as the priests and politicians would have us believe. It is the situation that is immoral. No man is immoral. Really, man is neither moral nor immoral, but the situation is immoral. And a person can be moral in an immoral situation if he strives hard, but then his whole life will be wasted in the very effort. He will not be able to do anything else. He will somehow save himself from being immoral. He will, with tremendous effort, suppress the temptation to steal; that is all he will achieve. So it is a question of changing the situation, because really the situation is immoral. No amount of anti-corruption campaigns are going to succeed if the situation is not changed. But if production grows and wealth is plentiful, corruption will go by itself. Nobody will steal if there is an abundance of wealth in the society.

Another friend has asked,

Question

BUDDHA, MAHAVIRA, KRISHNA AND RAMA -- THEY ALL TALKED OF

RENUNCIATION, BUT YOU SAY THAT WEALTH HAS TO BE INCREASED.

WHY THIS CONTRADICTION?

It is true that I ask you to produce more wealth. It is now difficult to ascertain exactly what Buddha, Rama and Krishna had said But if they said that wealth need not be produced, then they were wrong.

Talk of renunciation on the part of those who have no wealth is ridiculous. What would they renounce? Buddha could talk of renunciation because he was born in an affluent family. Buddha could afford to leave Yashodhara, his wife, behind, and move to the forest to live the life of an ascetic, because he knew that Yashodhara had a palace and every other means of security that one needs. But if a Buddha of the present times leaves his Yashodara a for twelve years, then at the end of twelve years he will find Yashodhara in some brothel and not in her home. Buddha could leave his son. Rahul, behind. because on his return he would find him in his own home. But it a present-day Buddha leaves his son and goes to the forest, the son will be found either in some orphanage or begging on the streets of Bombay. It would even be difficult to locate him. Buddha had abundant wealth, and men like him can very well talk of sacrifice because they have plenty to sacrifice.

But the irony is that people who had nothing chose to follow those who had plenty. All the wise men of this country came from affluent families, while the rest of the people lived in poverty and misery. I wonder how the people accepted their teaching and agreed to follow them. But there is a logic behind it, a reason for it. The poor derived some pleasure, some satisfaction from their acceptance of the Buddhas. They now said to themselves, "What is there in wealth? Buddha had so much and he is begging in the streets. We are already Buddhas; we are already beggars." The mind of India, that had suffered so much poverty, felt consoled and gratified. We were pleased to see Buddha and Mahavira begging. He bowed down to them not because of them, but because of the consolation we derived from them. We thought that we were blessed in our misery.

But remember, it is one thing to live in a palace and then leave it and beg, and quite another never to have lived in a palace and be a beggar on the streets. Buddha was not an ordinary beggar; even as a beggar he moved with the dignity and grace of a lord. Even emperors looked small before him, because he had renounced that which they were dying for. He was the emperor of emperors, because empires had become meaningless for him.

On the other hand there are those who have never known riches and whose whole being craves riches, but they don't have the will and energy and intelligence necessary to attain it. And then they say the grapes are sour. Buddha and Mahavira provide them with an alibi, an excuse. This is how they console themselves.

India has long been in that state of self: deception, and because of it she is in a mess. And this is her main difficulty, her real problem. We have to understand clearly that Buddha and Mahavira and men like them had renounced affluence, and not poverty. They had not known poverty and misery. Buddha's father had assembled around him all the beautiful women that were then available in Bihar. He had known women through and through.

And so it is understandable that he transcended sex.

But there are people who have not known a woman in their lives, not even touched one, and they are trying to become Buddhas. They are constantly dreaming about women.

There is a release from sex after you have experienced it thoroughly. But one who practices celibacy by keeping away from women will get mole entangled in sex than a married man gets. Really, the married man wants to run away from women; the husband is constantly trying to escape from his wife, to get rid of her. But the unmarried man cannot know the torments of the married. And if he decides to practice celibacy he is bound to be in trouble. great trouble.

To use contentment as an escape from poverty is one thing, and to give up riches with wisdom is quite another. It was unfortunate that India accepted the leadership of those who had really known riches and then renounced it. That is the basic reason why this country could not be prosperous, why it has remained poor for centuries. We took to a philosophy -- a philosophy of poverty -- and became its prisoners. And, curiously enough. we seem to enjoy it. It is like enjoying an itch!

We have had enough of this nonsense. It is time we said a complete goodbye to it. The mind of the country has to understand very clearly that we have to have wealth. Wealth is a must, because we can go beyond it only after we have it; otherwise it is tremendously difficult.

I don't say that there cannot be any exceptions to this rule, but exceptions only prove the rule. Somebody wrote to me that a particular saint was poor and yet he went beyond . H e may have been an exception. It is just possible, but he is not the rule. Rules cannot be made on the basis of a few exceptions. If there is malaria in a certain village and one of the villagers escapes infection without taking anti-malaria vaccine, does it prove that anti-malarial vaccination is

useless? Maybe he escaped just because malaria germs were negligible in his case. But he cannot be the rule. And the whole village will die if he is made the rule; and if the whole village dies, he cannot live. It is also possible that this man survived because all others had been vacillated; their immunity helped him.

Never should an exception be made the basis of a rule. But this is precisely the mistake India has been making. We make rules of exceptions; we do not make rules on the basis of the ordinary people -- the uncommon, the extraordinary, the rare become our basis.

And we try to regiment the common men and women according to them. But to make the uncommon an ideal for the common is like destroying the latter, and this is what has happened up to now.

If Mahavira becomes the ideal because he is naked, and all the people are asked to follow him, there is bound to be trouble. Mahavira had used clothes, he had lived in rich clothes, he had enjoyed clothes. Now those clothes have a definite the joys that nudity brings to Mahavira. Now if you tell a man who was born naked, who did not have clothes, that there is great joy in being nude, he will just laugh. He will say, Mahavira was a god, a teerthankara, an extraordinary man. He might have enjoyed being naked, but as far as I am concerned I enjoy clothes tremendously." Now see the difference. Mahavira enjoyed nudity because of clothes; this man enjoys clothes because of nudity. There is no great difference in the state of their minds. Their logic is the same: happiness comes from the unknown, the unfamiliar. The forbidden fruit tempts. And the known, the familiar, repels, is useless. For Mahavira, clothes, being familiar had become useless; for this man, nakedness had no use for the same reason.

We have to get rid of teachings that support poverty. These teachings create a non-dynamic society, a static society. It is because of them that the Indian society is so stagnant and dead. It has lost all dynamism of life.

If we have to create a dynamic society, a live society, we will have to lay its foundation on discontent, not on contentment. We always ask why we are poor. We are poor for the simple reason that we are contented with poverty. And as long as we are content, we will remain poor. Wealth will have to be created, and it can be created only by those who are discontented with poverty. There is no other way but discontent. Wealth has to be produced; it does not rain from the skies. It is a human product, and a discontented mind.

a searching mind, an adventurous mind is its first requirement.

But all our teachings applaud contentment. And it is these teachings that make for a static and dead society. And we have to get rid of them.

A friend has asked,

Question

YESTERDAY YOU TALKED ABOUT GANDHI AND CRITICIZED HIM. BUT

GANDHI ALWAYS WANTED THE COUNTRY TO BE PROSPEROUS, HAPPY

AND ITS PEOPLE TO BE GOOD. WHAT DO YOU SAY?

Certainly he wanted all this. But remember, the road to hell is paved with good intentions. Just desiring is not enough. I may very much want your cancer to go, but if I give you plain water for medication, your cancer will not disappear. It is not going to be cured by good intentions alone. I fervently desire you to be free of your T. B., and I tie a talisman on your arm -- your T.B. will remain. To cure it the science of tuberculosis will need to be understood.

Gandhi always wanted this country to be prosperous and happy and its people to be good.

But the ways he advocated were ways that lead to poverty and degradation. If Gandhi succeeds. India will be doomed to live in poverty forever. If what he said is accepted fully by this country, 250 million people out of its 500 millions will have to be ready to die and to die soon. And if the whole world accepts him, two billion out of its three and a half billion will have to perish right now. Gandhi's thoughts alone can kill more people than all the murderers of history -- Genghis, Hitler Stalin and Mao put together. Why?

Because what Gandhi says -- I mean his thinking -- is antediluvian; it belongs to the pre-industrial age, the feudal age. He is essentially a revivalist. The instruments of production that he advocates, like the spinning wheel and the spindle, belong to medieval times and are not at all useful and adequate for the huge human population of today. With such primitive tools of production we

cannot keep alive so large a population; they will simply starve and die. Please don't accept his teachings and implement them; otherwise the future history will say that Gandhi was the greatest killer the world has ever known, because he killed the largest number of men ever.

We need a mode of production that can maintain the huge population that we have now.

The mode of production that Gandhi advocated might have been adequate for the age of Rama the ancient age, when the population of the world was very small. The slow-going spinning wheel could do. But now very speedy tools of production are needed. because there are so many mouths to be fed. so many bodies to be clothed, so many men and women to be kept alive. Gandhian methods cannot keep them alive. If you accept and follow Gandhiism, poverty will become permanent; we can never remove it.

The questioner has further said that I criticize a person like Gandhi, who practiced what he professed. and that there was such unity in his word and deed.

There cannot be a greater lie than this. There was such a wide chasm between Gandhi's professions and his practice as can hardly be found in any other man's life. It has had no parallel. What I say may surprise you, but it iS true.

Gandhi always opposed the railways, and he spent the major part of his life on the railways, traveling all over India. He opposed the railways throughout his life and he traveled by railways throughout his life. He opposed allopathy, the modern medicine, all his life, and he said that chanting the name of Rama was the best medicine. But whenever, when seriously sick, he came near death, he always took to allopathy -- which saved his life. Neither the name of Rama nor naturopathy could save him -- though he used them until the disease became very serious. When everything else failed, he always took shelter in allopathy and survived. It is strange that all his life he opposed this system and it saved him throughout his life. Gandhi opposed the modern system of post and telegraph, and he made maximum use of them. He was one of those who wrote the largest number of letters to be carried by the postal system.

Here is a man who is fighting the railways system -- always sitting in a railway carriage. I am the only person who can compare with Gandhi as a user of the railways, and that only if I continue, at the present rate, to travel for the rest of

my life. And remember, he was an enemy of the railways; he said that railways w ere a sin and they should disappear from the world. He opposed every modern instrument and yet made the fullest use of them. And you say that there was unity in his professions and his practice. How is this unity?

I say there was no unity between Gandhi's word and action. What he said he would not translate into action. If you look at his whole life you will find that it was very different from his philosophy. But our difficulty is that when we accept someone as a mahatma, a great soul, we close our eyes, we become blind to him.

I saw Gandhi only once and I never felt like seeing him again. I was quite young then, just in my teens. His train was passing through my town and lots of people went to have a glimpse of him at the railway station. So did I. As I was leaving my home, my mother put three rupees into my pocket for small expenses, because the railway station was a good three miles away.

When I arrived, I found the railway platform terribly crowded and it was not possible for a boy like me to have a glimpse of him from there. So I went to the other side of the train where there was no platform. When Gandhi's train arrived I entered his compartment through the window. Gandhi did not notice me; his eyes fell first on the three silver coins showing from the breast pocket of my muslin shirt. He asked what it was, and I hurriedly took the money out, saying that I should donate it to the fund for the welfare of the untouchables. And before I could say yes or no, he dropped the money into the box meant for the fund. And the way I am, I said with perfect ease, "It is okay. You did well that you put the money in the box." And I really felt happy about it, thinking that I had done well not to have spent it already. But then, as my intuition dictated, I picked up the donation box with the money, and said to Gandhi, "Now I'll take the box with me, and I'll use this money in scholarship grants for the poor students of my school." Really, I had no intention to take away the box, which I picked up just to know how Gandhi would react to it. He said, "No, no, don't take the box. It is meant for a great work. This fund is meant for the untouchables. Leave it." To this I said, "Sir, you are not ready to part with this box with the same ease with which I gave you three RUPEES. " He then handed me an orange which I refused to take, saying, "I am not going to take this orange. For three rupees it is too costly. Better keep it with you." Then I looked into his eyes and said to myself, "The man I came to see is not there."

I came out of the train and stood on the side. The train moved and Gandhi was

still watching me and not the crowd. He seemed puzzled about what had happened.

Back home my mother asked me if I saw mahatmaji. I said, "Mahatmaji did not turn up."

Mother was now puzzled, and she asked, "What do you mean? Everyone says that he passed through the town." I then said, "The man who passed through the town was Mr.

Mohandas Karanchand Gandhi. He appeared to me to be a seasoned tradesman and not a mahatma, not a great soul."

This incident took place in my early days. Ever since I have tried hard to understand Gandhi, and the more I tried the more my first impression of him was confirmed and strengthened. But our difficulty is that once we believe something, we refuse to think and examine it. I do not say that you agree with me, but I do say please don't have fossil-like opinions about men and things, because it harms the thinking process of the country; it may even prove fatal.

Now everyone thinks that whatever Gandhi said is bound to benefit the country, because he was a mahatma, a saint. But it is not necessary that, being a saint, one only does good to the community.

I visited Rajkot recently. In the open area where I was going to address a meeting, I saw a number of bulls and cows. They were all very sick and skinny, almost dying. Inquiring, I learned that there was a scarcity of water as a result of a drought in the villages around Rajkot, and these animals had been collected from there so they might be saved from dying. I then asked what efforts were being made to save them. The man who was explaining things told me a strange story.

A saint came to Rajkot and fed the emaciated cows with quality sweets that people usually have for feasts, and the same day forty of them died. But the newspapers carried the saint's photograph saying, "What a saint! -- who feeds animals with quality sweets meant for human beings!" It seems that to be a saint it is necessary to part with intelligence altogether. He gives sweets to animals that badly needed water and fodder to save them. It would have been better if they were butchered instead -- they would have died peacefully. But the saint was applauded for being a kindly saint and a devotee of cows.

India's poverty will never go, it will abide, if the remedy that Gandhi suggests is applied.

To end poverty, technology is needed, and Gandhi was the greatest enemy of technology.

He said that technology was the invention of Satan. But, in fact, it is technology that is going to end poverty and bring prosperity to this earth. And it is again technology which iS going to take us to the moon and Mars when this earth will be overpopulated. In fifty years from now this planet of ours will cease to be a tit place for us to live.

I do not know how, with Gandhi's spinning wheel, millions and billions of men can be fed and clothed and housed. And I do not know how, with his spinning wheel, man will reach the moon and other planets and settle there.

Fortunately, however, there is no such danger, because even those who shout "Victory to Gandhi!" do not believe in his teachings, do not follow him. So there is no possibility of any danger. But if his ideas find wide acceptance the danger will be there. And then his ideas will turn back the hands of the clock by two thousand years; we will be back in the medieval times. What he calls his rama-rajya, the legendary kingdom of Rama, is nothing but another name for an extremely backward social system. Rama-rajya was much too backward in contrast to the present times. But Gandhi always aspired for rama-rajya Another friend has said that what I am saying is exactly what the ancient Hindu culture stood for; it is the real socialism that the Hindu culture advocated. But I fail to understand what he means. He also says that socialism had already happened in India.

Socialism did not happen anywhere in the world in the past. And as far as India is concerned there was no possibility whatsoever of its happening here. And the sooner you get rid of what you call your ancient culture the better. A disease does not become good just because it is your disease. And nothing becomes respectable just because it is old and ancient. But the difficulty is that we begin to like even our shackles if they have been on our feet for thousands of years. I don't understand what you are talking about. When did we have socialism in India?

Another friend has said that as all that is good was already there in India in the

past, so we should go back to the past.

There was nothing good in the past to which we should go back. In the first place we would not have left it behind us if it was good. No one ever leaves the good behind. And if one leaves it behind, he does so in the search for the better. But we have been laboring under great illusions. We believe that the India of the past was a golden bird. It was never so. Of course, it was a golden bird for a few, and it remains so even today; but it was never a golden bird for all.

We believe that houses in ancient India were without lock and key. People were so good and honest that padlocks were not needed at all. But I don't think this could be true. And if it was true, then the reasons for it were different from those we infer. Buddha had been exhorting people not to steal; Mahavira had been exhorting people not to steal. If people were so good and honest that they did not have to lock up their houses, then who were they whom Buddha and Mahavira asked not to steal? If people were really good and honest then Buddha and Mahavira were crazy.

Theft was always there, but if padlocks were really not seen anywhere, then it only means that they had nothing in their houses that was worth stealing. There could be no other reason. Or maybe. they did not possess the mind that subsequently invented locks. But the absence of locks does not prove that people were honest.

All the scriptures preached non-stealing. Buddha talked against stealing and dishonesty day in and day out. Socrates said the same things in Greece two thousand, five hundred years ago. He said that youngsters had gone astray. they did not listen to their parents, that teachers were not respected, that people had turned dishonest and corrupt. There is a six-thousand-year-old book in China. If you read its preface you will think that you are going through the editorial of this morning's newspaper. It says that people are dishonest, that they have become materialists, that there has been great moral decline, that corruption is rampant, and that anarchy has set in and that doomsday is at hand. And this six-thousand-year-old book also says that the people who lived before were good and honest.

That the people in the past were good is nothing more than a myth, a fantasy. The truth is that we have forgotten the people of the past, and a handful of them whom we still remember are at the root of the trouble. We remember Mahavira, hut we do not remember the people of his times. Then we think that people of

his times must have been good people. But if the people of his times were really good, we would not have cared to remember Mahavira at all. Mahavira is yet alive in our memory because of the people of his day.

The schoolmaster writes on a blackboard with a piece of white chalk. If he wrote on a white board -- and he can -- you could not read it. The writing shows on the blackboard because of the contrast. Mahavira shines as a great man for two thousand five hundred years. It could not have been possible if the social background against which he stood had been white and clean. Really the society of his time must have been corrupt and ugly. A few great men shine for ages because the rest of mankind has been like a blackboard on which white writing shows.

Never was the whole human society good. It was not even as good as it is today. Every day we are progressing towards goodness, but we are victims of a false idea that we are declining, that we are going downhill, that we are getting worse and worse. We say that it was satyug, the age of truth, in the past, we say that we have left our golden age behind, and now it is the kaliyug, the dark age, now it is downhill and downhill all the way ahead.

And the downfall of a community is a certainty if this thought takes hold of its mind that decline is its future, because it is thought that makes us move. But we firmly believe that our golden age, the best times, have already happened, that we left behind us all that was good and that now there is only evil and darkness in store for us. This has become our conditioning. We really believe that it is going to be worse and worse in the future.

Now when someone stabs someone in your neighborhood, you cry kaliyug, you cry

"wolf"; you say that the dark age is now here. And when someone runs away with the wife of someone else you scream that the worst of the dark age has happened. But when your saints and seers, your rishis of the past ran away with others' women, then it was satyug, the age of truth and righteousness! And it was satyug when the gods of heaven came down and seduced the wives of others -- your own saints! And now it is the dark age just because the abductor happens to be an ordinary man living in your neighborhood! It is a strange reasoning. It was a good world when the wife of Rama was stolen. And when the wife of some present-day Ramchandra living in your locality is stolen, it becomes evil, dark,

abominable.

No, man is becoming better and better each day. And if we have to make our future better, then we had better have our golden age in the future and leave the dark age behind. This should be the order of things: darkness in the past and light in the future; the dark age behind and the golden age ahead. If a bright future has to be created. hope, intense hope is necessary. Without hope you cannot build a beautiful future. In my view, lack of hope is one reason why modern man is stumbling in his onward journey. He is without hope for his future; it seems all is dark ahead. This darkness is of our own making.

Never was man so good as he is today. There was a famine in Bihar recently. Twenty million people would have perished, as the famine was so great, but only forty persons died. How is it that twenty million lives were saved? -- the whole world came to their rescue. School children in far-off countries who had not heard of Bihar before, saved their pocket money and sent it for the succor of the starving people. The whole world rushed to save those in Bihar who were all unknown to them and with whom they had nothing to do. It had never happened before; it happened for the first time. Again, it is for the first time that Bombay feels disturbed when there is a war in Vietnam. The whole world feels hurt for a wrong happening in any corner of the earth. Humanity has attained to this sensitivity, to this awareness for the first time. It is unprecedented. Man has grown

-- his understanding has grown; his happiness has grown.

One last word. Two or three friends have asked,

Question

YOU ADMIRE AMERICA SO MUCH, YOU SAY THAT SOCIALISM WILL COME

FIRST IN AMERICA, BUT IT IS IN AMERICA WHERE HIPPIES, BEATLES AND

BEATNIKS ARE INCREASING IN NUMBER, WHERE PEOPLE ARE TAKING

INCREASINGLY TO DRINKS AND DRUGS LIKE LSD AND MESCALINE,

WHERE CONSUMPTION OF SLEEPING PILLS AND TRANQUILIZERS IS

ASSUMING ALARMING PROPORTIONS AND WHERE PEOPLE ARE

DISTURBED AND RESTLESS. CAN YOU SAY SOMETHING ABOUT IT?

You should know that no animal ever gets disturbed. Have you ever heard that a water buffalo lost his peace of mind? Have you ever seen a donkey spending a sleepless nights or getting bored? Have you come across a bull committing suicide, because life became meaningless? No, no animals ever get bored. disturbed or worried; nor do they commit suicide. Why?

The reason is that the mind of animals is very undeveloped. The more the mind develops, the more you become sensitive and understanding. As the mind grows, your vision grows; you begin to see things around you with clarity. As your mind expands, your being expands in the same measure. And with the development of intelligence begins the search for the meaning of life, its significance. If there are hippies and Beatles and beatniks in today's America, if its young men and women are getting rebellious, they are the barometer of the fact that consciousness is touching new heights there, that they see things that are not yet seen by us.

Man's intelligence has developed in a great way, and it iS this developed intelligence that is making him restless. The more intelligence, the more restlessness.

And remember. the greater your restlessness, the greater peace you can attain. Levels of peace and restlessness -- their proportions are always the same. If man's restlessness is say, only two milligrams, the peace he will attain is not going to be more or less than two milligrams. And if his restlessness grows to be a thousand tons, his peace will grow to be the same thousand tons. Our capacities in both directions -- dialectical directions -- grow together. They are coextensive. If I become very sensitive to ugliness, I am bound to be as sensitive to beauty too. The man with a high sense of beauty will have a high sense of ugliness also. Of course, ugliness will hurt him, but beauty will comfort him in the same measure.

As man's consciousness expands, his world of anxieties will equally expand, because now the anxieties of others enter his awareness. Man, today, is much more intelligent than before, and that is why he is so anxious and unhappy too.

But because of our mounting anxiety and unhappiness we need not despair and retrace our steps and turn back to the past, our new difficulties and problems are only a challenge and we have to accept the challenge and go onward and forward. We have to find new paths of peace --

peace commensurate with our restlessness. Old paths will not do; new ones have to be found.

Man is, today, on a brink, and his consciousness is nearing a great leap forward, a quantum leap.

For example, when the first monkey came down from the tree and for the first time walked on two legs instead of four, he must have felt very awkward. And then the older monkeys, his elders, who remained sitting in the tree must have jeered at him, saying,

"What are you doing, you fool? How stupid it looks. Is it becoming for monkeys to walk on two legs?" And the monkey walking on two legs must have gone through a lot of worry and anxiety, any amount of sufferings. Maybe his backbone had ached, his sleep had been disturbed. But it was from this monkey that humanity came into being and developed to its present state. In the same way man's grown-up consciousness today --

which is undergoing such pains that it is driving him to the point of committing suicide --

is soon going to give birth to a new humanity, a higher humanity.

The emergence of a new consciousness in man is at hand. And remember, the aboriginals still living in the jungles are not going to participate in this quantum leap, nor are the saints and priests sitting and singing in temples and mosques going to take part in this great transformation. They are all seeking comfort and contentment, and they are so afraid of discontent. Only they are going to be partners in the glory of giving birth to the new man who are prepared to walk through the fire of discontent, and who have the courage to go beyond it.

In this respect, we are a very unfortunate people. We cannot produce hippies, we cannot be that anxious, we cannot suffer so intensely, and consequently we cannot attain to that deep peace. America today stands as a vanguard on a forward line from where a leap is possible. It is a very critical situation where

many times one may feel like escaping and retreating. That is why men like Mahesh Yogi have influence in America. The people who feel panicky and want to go back are being influenced by Mahesh Yogi and others.

They are telling them, "Why worry? Get out of this mess; close your eyes, chant a mantra and go back to the past." For the same reason Gandhi has influenced America more than he has influenced his own country. The backward-going mind has panicked and it says,

"Yonder is an abyss; let us go back! Gandhi is right to say that technology and skyscrapers are useless!"

The cry of "Go back to the past" has always been there, and it has done us no good. We have to go forward, there cannot be any going back. There is no way to do it. And even if there was a way, it would be so dangerous to do so. Nothing can be gained by returning to the past. If a grade four student wants to go back to first grade because the homework was easy, there is no sense in doing it. And even if he actually goes back, he will find it to be meaningless. He has now the maturity that comes with passing three grades; he cannot stay in first grade. So with his highly developed mind, man cannot go back to the times of Rama. He cannot return to the caves. Of course, he may enjoy it for a change if he returns to the forest for a while.

Recently about two dozen of my friends from Bombay had gone to Kashmir with me. In fact, they had escaped from Bombay and they were with me in Pahalgaon, a scenic spot in Kashmir. The man who cooked for me at Pahalgaon told me every day that he would be grateful if I took him with me to see Bombay. I said to him, "You seem to be crazy.

You see the friends here with me, they are all from Bombay and they are here to see Pahalgaon. You are fortunate to be in Pahalgaon itself; better enjoy it." He then said,

"Life is so dull here that I wonder why people come here at all. There is nothing here. I crave to see Bombay." He wants to see Bombay, and I want that he should have the opportunity to see that city. Why? -- because then he will be able to enjoy Pahalgaon too.

That will be his gain if he visits Bombay.

Man has to go forward. Once in a while he can go back to the past to have a brief holiday.

That would be pleasant. But a return to the past for good is not possible. It is different if for fun you sit sometimes at Rajghat with a spinning wheel as the leaders do. It is a pleasant hobby and a cheap one at that if you occasionally take to spinning and get photographed and filmed. But it would be utterly wrong if we make the spinning wheel the kingpin of our industries. That way the spinning wheel will be dangerous.

No culture of the past, be it Hindu, Mohammedan or Christian, can make man happy if he returns to it. Man has to go ahead and ahead into the future. In that future no Hindu, no Mohammedan and no Christian will survive; only man will survive. In that future only man will live.

The future belongs to man. And here we have to think together about how much creativity we need to bring that future in. We also have to consider how much wealth and health will be needed to make man happy, so that from his happiness he creates music, he goes on the search for his soul, and ultimately reaches the temple of God.

There are many questions to be answered. I will take them up tomorrow. And if you have any more questions, you can send them in writing.

I am grateful to you for having quietly listened to my talk with so much love. And lastly, I bow down to the God residing in each of you. Please accept my salutations.

Beware of Socialism

Chapter #4

Chapter title: Democratic socialism is a lie

16 April 1970 pm in Cross Maidan

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A number of questions have been received; they are in the context of the previous discourses. A friend has asked: IN THE COURSE OF YOUR TALKS ON SOCIALISM

AND COMMUNISM YOU DID NOT GIVE ANY THOUGHT TO DEMOCRATIC

SOCIALISM. CAN YOU SAY SOMETHING ABOUT DEMOCRATIC SOCIALISM?

It would be useful to understand a few things about democratic socialism. Democratic socialism is a contradiction in terms; it is a combination of two words that contradict each other. It is like saying "a barren woman's son", which is again a contradiction in terms. If a woman has a son she could not be barren; and if she is barren she could not have a son.

There is no grammatical mistake in the composition of the phrase "a barren woman's son", but it cannot be true. In the same way there cannot be a thing like democratic socialism; it is just an empty phrase, a meaningless cliche. Why?

Democracy and socialism, as socialism is currently known cannot go together, because the one cancels the other. Because democracy has to be destroyed in the very process of bringing socialism, the so-called socialism cannot be brought without murdering democracy. And it is necessary to understand why democracy will have to go for socialism to come.

The first principle, the foundational principle of democracy is that it gives every individual person the freedom to live, to work, to earn, to produce and to own,

use and amass his production, his property. It is one of his basic rights. The next fundamental principle of democracy ordains that there should be no injustice to anyone. And another basic principle of democracy says that the majority cannot subject the minority to any injustices. If, in a village, there live a hundred Mohammedans and ten Hindus, and the Mohammedans decide to kill the Hindus and say that they are going to do it democratically, because the majority is in support of killing and only the minority is against it, then we will say that it is wrong, it violates democracy. Democracy means that even if there is a minority of one, the majority cannot subject it to injustices, and deprive it of any of its basic rights.

Capitalism, or the capitalist, is a minority today. If the majority, whom the so-called socialism claims to speak and work for, uses democracy to destroy this minority, then it knocks out the very foundation of democracy. And minorities change with time. Today one group is in the minority, tomorrow another may take its place. Now some people say that wealth should be distributed -- someone should not have more and others less --

because wealth creates jealousy and bitterness. But it is necessary to ask if it is justice that those who did not do a thing to produce wealth, who took no part whatsoever in its creation, who were just spectators, should now, when wealth is created, come forward and demand its distribution.

It is interesting to note that whenever a great invention was made, an invention which later on became an instrument of great production, it could not be easily sold, it had no buyers. The inventors and innovators have always been looked upon as crazy people.

I have heard that a scientist took an inventor to any number of people and introduced his new design to them. And the inventor was ready to sell his design for just fifty rupees, but nobody wanted to oblige him. The first design of the motor car was thought to be a piece of madness, and so was the first design of the airplane. No one was ready to buy and try them, because one could not really believe they would be worthwhile. They must have been men of rare courage who worked on those new designs and opened unheard of doors to production. But now that the wealth is there, all those who had been idle spectators, who had called the pioneers mad and crazy, come forward and ask for a share in that wealth, saying that wealth belongs to all.

A handful of people have created wealth, but after it has been created, all those who have had no hand in its creation are claimants for a share in its ownership. But this is not what democracy means. Democracy means that the producer should own his produce. And if he distributes it, shares it with others, it is his pleasure. But the so-called claimants have no right to it. And if it ever became a matter of right, then nobody knows where this matter will end.

Wealth is the creation of intelligence and talent. Today we envy that intelligence and say that wealth should be distributed equally. In the same way, tomorrow we will say that we cannot tolerate that a few persons have beautiful wives while others have ugly ones. We will say that this is inequality, it cannot be tolerated; everyone should have equal rights to beautiful women. We will not be wrong if we say that, because basically it is the same logic; there is no difference at all. And then the day after we will say that it is intolerable that a handful of people are intelligent while others are stupid. This too is inequality; we demand equal distribution of intelligence and talent. It is again the same logic that demands equal distribution of wealth.

But the whole approach is anti-democratic. In fact, every person is different and unique.

Every person is born with distinct and different potentialities, and they will seek and develop their own potentialities, and they will create what they are made to create. And as such they will own their creation. And if they share it with others, they do so for their own joy. But we have no right to claim it; it would be grossly unJust.

Socialism, however, approves of many such injustices, because it is easy to win the majority in support of injustices. But injustice will not become justice and a lie will not become truth just because the majority supports them. Freedom to own private property is one of the fundamental human rights, and democracy accepts this right of the individual.

So when somebody says that socialism with democracy is possible, he is saying an outright lie. Socialism violates the basic principle of democracy. Democracy and socialism cannot go together.

The second thing is that socialism only talks of the great values, which make for the basis of its philosophy; it cannot achieve them. So it will be worthwhile if we

go into some of these values at length.

Freedom is perhaps the greatest value in man's life. There is no greater value than this, because freedom is foundational to the whole development of man. That is why bondage or slavery is the worst state of human existence and freedom its best and most beautiful.

And socialism cannot be established without fighting and finishing freedom. It is, of course, possible that the majority may consent to destroy the freedom of the minority. But still it is unfair and unjust. Destruction of freedom can never be democratic.

Freedom of thought is the very life of democracy; it is its very soul. But socialism cannot stand freedom of thought, because freedom of thought includes the freedom to support capitalism. It is difficult for socialism to swallow. Socialism wants to destroy capitalism root and branch, and therefore it has to destroy freedom of thought. And it is unthinkable how, after destroying the right of the individual to hold property and his freedom of thought. socialism can be democratic.

Democratic socialism is a blatant lie. The fact is that the word democracy has respectability, and socialism does not want to forego this respectability. That is why Russia is democratic, China is democratic, and the rest of them are democratic. Man can misuse words in a big way. He can label Satan as God. Who can stop it? It is difficult.

Let it be clearly understood that democracy is a value that goes with capitalism, and not with socialism. And if democracy has to live, it can only live with capitalism; it cannot live with socialism. Democracy is an inalienable part of the capitalist way of life, and as such it can only go with capitalism.

Similarly there are other values -- we are not even aware of them -- which can be destroyed easily. And they are already being destroyed. The individual has the ultimate value. But in the eyes of socialism it is not the individual but the collective, the crowd, that has value. And socialism accepts that the individual can be sacrificed for the collective, the society. The individual, in fact, has always been sacrificed in the name of great principles, and for the sake of big and high-sounding names. He has been sacrificed sometimes for the sake of the nation and sometimes for the sake of religion, and sometimes for the sake of the

KORAN, the Gita and innumerable other things. But man refuses to learn from history. When old altars disappear, he creates new ones, and continues sacrificing the individual. Socialism is such a new altar.

If man has to learn anything from his history, the one lesson that is worth learning is this: The individual cannot be sacrificed for anything. Even the greatest of nations does not have the right to ask for the sacrifice of a single individual. Even the greatest of humanity does not have the right to sacrifice the individual for its sake -- because the individual is a living consciousness, and it is dangerous to sacrifice this living consciousness at the altar of a system or an organization, however great it be; because the system is a lifeless arrangement, a dead entity, and it is not proper to sacrifice a living man for the sake of a dead system.

But we have gotten into the habit of killing the individual, and even now we are seeking new avenues, new altars at which the individual can be sacrificed. The new altar is socialism.

Socialism is not democratic. The socialism that is sought to be forced on us can never be democratic. In only one way can socialism come without sacrificing freedom, and that is when it comes effortlessly, naturally and by itself. Otherwise it is not possible for socialism to be democratic.

Only today a friend told me that he had read in some newspaper about a unique little island somewhere in the Pacific Ocean. The population of that island is not large, some hundreds of people live there. But the island is so rich in phosphorous mines, and those mines yield so much wealth that every person earns at least eight thousand rupees from them. In that island no one is poor, no one is rich, just because men are few and wealth is plentiful. This little island is perhaps the first socialist society on this earth at the moment. But the people of the island don't even know that they are a socialist society -- it is not necessary for them to know it.

Abundant wealth and scant population make for socialism.

The friend also told me about a unique custom that exists in that island and perhaps nowhere else. If a guest in a family admires a thing -- say the radio in the sitting room --

then the family immediately makes a gift of the radio to the guest. Because they

believe that if a person has a liking for a certain thing, it should go to him; it really belongs to him. This custom exists there because they have abundant wealth and so their clinging to wealth has withered away.

Someday we may have socialism on the whole earth. It is necessary, and it will come, if the socialists are not in haste. But if the socialists continue to be in a hurry, as they are, then the chances are that it will never come; it will be delayed forever. Socialism will come without sacrificing democracy when we have created a situation with plenty of wealth and less numbers of people. But then we will not know when it came, how it came. It will come silently, as every significant thing in life comes.

There is another thing that deserves attention, and it should be understood well. Many friends have complained that I say that labor has no use in the creation of wealth. I never said that labor has no use in the creation of riches. I only said that sooner or later labor will increasingly become a non-essential factor in the production of goods. over a long period it has already been losing its place. Labor has a hand in the creation of wealth, hut it has not been the central factor, the basic factor of production. It does not play a pivotal role. The basic factor, the pivotal factor is the mind of man -- his intelligence, his talent.

It is man's intelligence that has discovered new dimensions of creating wealth.

It is also important to know that labor is a perishable commodity; it dies soon and readily if it is not used. Unused labor dies every day. If I have not worked today, then my unused labor cannot be preserved in some safe for future use. I will not do the same work ever again that I could have done had I worked today, because labor cannot be saved. It is lost every day; it is perishable. It is not that a worker will escape being exploited if he does not work in a field or factory for all his life. He will die nonetheless, because labor cannot be preserved; it cannot be put in a safe deposit.

Capitalism, for the first time, found ways and means to preserve labor. It made labor, a perishable commodity. preservable in the form of wages in money; that is, capital created out of it. So it is again capitalism that made it possible. If I work this very day and save five rupees of my wages, it is labor made durable. If it had not turned up in the form of five rupees, it would have gone to waste. It is not that my unexpended labor would have remained with me even if I had not worked to earn the wage in money. But it is strange that I say that while I had put

in ten rupees worth of labor, I was paid only five. The fact is, that if I had not worked at all, my labor was not worth a single paisa. It is desirable, however, that some day I should be paid ten rupees instead of five that I receive right now. But it does not mean that ten rupees will come after destroying the capitalist mode of production. No, this system has to be retained and progressively developed.

As it is today, the capitalist system is not adequate. And don't think, as many friends have said, that I support the system as it is. The system as it is needs to be tremendously improved and developed. As it is, it is primitive; it is just the abe of capitalism. But the socialist cry is coming very much in the way of its growth, and it will not allow it to grow if it has its way. But if capitalism is allowed to grow it will be quite possible for it to pay the worker ten rupees, even twenty, in the place of today's five. It will be possible to pay even the person who does not work. And if we go through a full technological revolution, which is in the making, it is just likely people demanding work will be paid less and those agreeing to enjoy leisure will be paid more. It will be so because the utility of labor is connected with so many other things.

If tomorrow your town is equipped with every kind of automatic machine, soon tens of thousands of people will be out of employment. But what will you do with the huge wealth that the automatic machines will produce? You will have to give it away in the form of compensation to the unemployed people. But someone among them may say that he cannot sit idle for twenty-four hours, he must have at least two hours' work every day, otherwise he will go crazy. This man will have to be paid less because he wants both: work and money. And another man who agrees to sit idle and be content with only money, will have to be paid more than the one asking for work.

This can be possible in fifty years' time if capitalist production is fully developed and automatized, and no efforts are made to sabotage it at its various points.

The ways of sabotaging are devious; they are not easily discernible. On the one hand the leaders shout that the country is poor, and production. more production, is the need of the hour, and on the other hand they go on imposing higher taxes on those very people who produce more. This is utterly foolish. If you really mean production of wealth, the pattern of taxation will have to be radically altered. People who produce more should pay less tax and those producing less should be made to pay more tax. The person who produces two hundred

thousand rupees worth of goods annually should pay less tax than the one who produces only one hundred thousand rupees worth of goods. Similarly, the producer of five hundred thousand rupees worth of goods should pay less than the one producing two hundred thousand rupees worth of goods. And he should be exempted totally from paying any taxes, who produces, say, a million rupees worth of goods in one year. And if someone produces ten million worth of goods, the government should pay him instead.

Then alone, wealth, abundant wealth, can be created. The key to production is incentive.

If an entrepreneur today earns two hundred thousand rupees in profit, he is made to part with ninety percent of his income by way of taxes. And if another entrepreneur earns, save five hundred thousand, he will have to part with his entire income to pay the taxes.

And in case someone dares to earn a million rupees, he will have to sell his assets to pay the taxes. Under the circumstances the producer thinks -- and thinks rightly -- that it is useless to produce. Thus you are obstructing those who can create wealth and you sing hymns Of praise to that largest group, the idlers who do not produce and earn at all. Can there be a better way of destroying the country than this?

The hymns of praise meant to placate the masses may be pleasant at the moment, but they are going to prove very costly and dangerous.

It is very interesting to note that a great majority of mankind is wholly uncreative. This majority is contented with eating and producing children. It has done nothing else. Only a very small fraction of humanity has engaged itself in creativity and produced great results. Take any field, be it poetry or great painting, production of wealth, science or religion -- only a handful of men and women have attained to peaks of creativity. The tragedy is that it is these very people who are being maligned, thwarted and suppressed.

And it is a very absurd logic at that. On the one hand you say that wealth is urgently needed and on the other you praise those who are without any wealth. Why don't they have limit.

They have been on this earth for millions of years. Their forefathers were here. Have you ever thought why they did not have wealth? They produced children

and not wealth --

and it is thus they have always remained poor. It is amazing that creators of wealth are made to feel guilty about it, they are treated as criminals and are going to be put on the cross of the society. Their only crime is that they did not produce children and sit idly by, like the rest of mankind. And their worst crime is that they produced wealth. Now those who did not take part in the production of wealth will take revenge, they will strangle them on the grounds of being exploiters. This is quite strange. This wealth has not come through exploitation; it has been created with great intelligence and hard work. It has been created through the adventure of the mind in many dimensions.

But we give no thought to it and we are determined to destroy those who create wealth and prosperity. This is our strange logic all the way down. This is a dichotomy.

I happened to visit a family-planning center a short time ago. The whole country and its government are engaged in an effort to limit the size of the family with a view to controlling the exploding population of the country. But our logic is upside-down everywhere. If we have to have family planning it is necessary that we think about it in its total perspective. As I said earlier, that if we have to have wealth, the producer should be given full encouragement and incentive to do it, but the contrary is happening -- he is being punished and persecuted. And why should he then produce if he is going to be punished for it? And the people who are not productive will not do it in any case. And those who can produce, will withhold their hands in despair. And consequently the country will suffer and go down the drain. It can never be rich.

When I arrived at the center I saw a lot of propaganda being done about the importance of family planning. I asked the officer in charge of the center if he knew about the rates of income tax for the bachelors and the married couples and couples with children. The officer said that there was no connection whatsoever between taxation and family planning. I then said that in that case there is no connection between intelligence and family planning.

If the government wants to limit the family it should levy heavy taxes on those who produce more children than the prescribed number. But the contrary is happening on this front too. Parents with many children pay much less tax than those with less or no children. And this law works against family planning. If it

is to succeed, parents with more children should be made to pay a larger amount of tax than the others with less or no children. A family with three children -- if three be the limit -- should pay much less tax than the family with more than three children. And if a family exceeds the number of five then the schools and hospitals should be asked to charge higher fees for their children's studies and treatment. Then alone will families feel compelled to limit their size.

But, currently, parents with a larger number of children are given higher rebates in income tax. The bachelors pay higher taxes than the married ones. It is utterly foolish.

Bachelors should receive full exemption from taxes, or if they have to be taxed at all the rates should be much lower so that young people abstain from marriage or marry late. On the other hand married people should be taxed heavily so that marriage becomes costly.

And let there be a graduated increase in tax rates with every increase in the number of a family's children Then there will be a system a logic in the management of the state affairs; otherwise the whole thing, as it is, is simply ridiculous. What does it mean that while you cry for limiting the family, you go on rewarding those with unlimited families?

The same chaos prevails in the field of production. And it is so in many dimensions of life that for lack of a clear perspective we just go on drifting. If we want to end poverty then all avenues of production should be opened and every facility and incentive given to those who have the talent to produce. If the country's poverty has to be liquidated, then capital from all over the world should be invited for investment in India. But we think that if people from other countries come here, they would exploit us. As I said, if labor is not used, it just perishes.

So if international capital is allowed to be invested here, it can convert the entire unused labor of this country into solid wealth. But we are afraid that we will be exploited It is a very wrong way of thinking. International capital will not exploit us; on the contrary, it will help us immensely. It will utilize the huge unemployed manpower of this country which is just being wasted everyday like the waters of the Ganges and Narmada -- when you don't use them, they disappear into the ocean. If we fail to utilize our labor energy that is abounding it will disappear into the cosmos and be lost to us forever. Let it be used and transformed into

wealth. Then alone it can be preserved.

But we are a strange people. We say that it does not matter if ten rupees worth of labor is wasted, but we will not agree to work for five rupees and be robbed of the other five, as if we have five rupees in cash on us and someone is going to grab it. No it is not so; nobody is robbing you.

The whole concept of exploitation is full of nonsense.

Capitalism is an instrument for converting labor into wealth and if capitalism is allowed to grow unimpeded it call find ways to convert the entire labor of the country into wealth but the socialists say that they will hand over everything -- the means of production and labor -- to the state The irony is that the politicians are, and have always been. the most inefficient and worthless class of people in the world.

There is a reason for this. It is that merit is valued in every walk of human life except in politics. In politics alone merit has no value at all. The person who cannot be employed in a shoe-shop to sell shoes can very well become the education minister of a country --

there is no difficulty in it, because it is not necessary that a minister of education have any educational qualifications. In fact, politics is the refuge, and the only refuge of the misfits and the nincompoops.

A person who has no qualifications whatsoever, is qualified for politics. Politics does not ask for any particular qualifications, specialized knowledge, on the part of those who want to enter its arena. It is a strange profession, which calls for nothing except that you can shout slogans and get some followers behind you. But what will he do by becoming the education minister? Vice-chancellors and academicians will dance in attendance on him and the man will put his thumbprint in place of his signature. It is an outrage on education that it should be directed by one who cannot sign his name. A person who does not know what medical science is becomes the health minister to take care of the country's health.

Politics, which is the haven of the nincompoops, is trying to take over the wealth of the country as well. It says that trade, commerce, industries -- including all means of production -- should be put in the hands of the state, which is another name for the politician. So the politicians will manage and control the economic

life of the country. It seems that they are under a vow to ruin the country forever. And they will do it; they will not stop short of it.

My vision is different. It is that the politician can be prevented from ruining the human societies of the world if he is prevented from directly controlling the government and the administration of the state. The elected representatives of the people. of course, should form the parliament, but the parliament or the majority party in parliament will not form the Cabinet or the council of ministers. The majority party should find highly qualified and experienced specialists and experts in different fields of government -- like education, health, finance and the rest -- and form the council of ministers with them. For example, it will be the task of the majority party to find the best educationist for the job of education minister. Similarly it will appoint the best physician as health minister. The right to select the specialist members of the Cabinet will certainly belong to the majority party, but no popular representatives will be appointed as education minister and health minister, or any minister for that matter.

What we have at the moment is mobocracy; it is certainly not democracy. It is all right for the people to choose their representatives for the parliament, but it should be the clearly defined task of the majority party in parliament to find the best men of merit to administer the various divisions and functions of the government. They have to see to it that the selected ministers are fully qualified for their different jobs. Then we will have meritocracy in the place of the mobocracy that we have. Unless democracy is wedded to meritocracy, i will remain a tool in the hands of the ignorant and stupid people. And unless democracy it allied with meritocracy, democracy will continue to be the instrument of man's downfall and degradation; it can never be the instrument of his uplifting and glory.

I am all in favor of the people electing their representatives; it is their right -- but they have no right to make their representative the education minister of the country. The representatives will have this much right: They will search for the best educationist and invite him to shoulder the responsibility of education minister. The Cabinet and the administration of the country should be in the hands of the experts. Meritocracy means the rule of the experts, the specialists, the qualified people; it is the rule of men of merit.

It is the age of specialization -- we have specialists even for small things of life. Those days are gone when you had to go to the village doctor who just checked

your pulse and prescribed medicine without asking you if you suffered from headache or bellyache. It happened in pre-specialization days when the village doctor was supposed to know every thing. Things have changed since.~

I have heard that fifty years from now a woman visited the clinic of a doctor and said that she had eye trouble. The doctor took her into his consultation room and enquired which particular eye was giving her trouble. When she pointed to her left eye, the doctor said,

"Excuse me, I am a specialist for the right eye. The left-eye specialist lives in the neighboring building."

Even one eye is such a big thing that a single doctor for both eyes will not last long. Even a single eye is a great phenomenon -- much too complex in itself. It needs specialization and its own specialist.

The eye is certainly a complex organ, but the most complex organ is the state, which is in the hands of the most incompetent, the most inexpert and unskilled people. They will continue to ruin the country. And the inexpert want to monopolize everything. They want all power for themselves. Besides political power, they want to monopolize economic power too. They want trade and industries and everything in their hands. Even science and religion are not spared -- they want everything under the sun. They may desire so, but if we allow their desires to be fulfilled, danger is guaranteed.

That is why I place this idea of meritocracy before you. Meritocracy is not opposed to democracy; meritocracy is a concept of working through democracy. And sooner or later, with the growth of understanding, the specialist is going to be significant in the whole world. Maybe, sooner or later, everything will be in the hands of the expert, the knowledgeable.

A friend has sent this comment to me:

AS YOU SAY THAT ONLY THE CAPITALISTS KNOW HOW TO PRODUCE

WEALTH, THE brahmins IN THE PAST CLAIMED THAT THEY ALONE COULD

PRODUCE KNOWLEDGE. WHERE ARE THOSE brahmins AND THEIR

MONOPOLY OF KNOWLEDGE? NOW ANYONE IS CREATING KNOWLEDGE.

IN THE SAME WAY WHEN THE CAPITALISTS WILL HAVE DISAPPEARED, EVERYBODY WILL CREATE WEALTH.

I would say to this friend that he is not aware of what we have said on this matter. We have not been saying that only the brahmin can create knowledge, no; we have been saying that he who creates knowledge is a brahmin. And this is so even today; it is the brahmin who is creating knowledge in the whole world. Einstein is a brahmin, not a businessman. And Bertrand Russell is a brahmin. And so is Marx. All of them are brahmins. If Marx had been born in India he would have been a maharishi -- a great seer -

- a long time ago. But what do I mean by a brahmin?

Nobody is a brahmin by birth. It was a grave mistake, all injustice at that, that the concept of brahmin was joined with birth. The concept that there are four types of men on this earth is very significant. It is really a concept of deep insight. The error came in when it was tied with birth. No one is a brahmin by birth, or a tradesman or a warrior by birth.

But there are people for whom the search for knowledge becomes their very breath, their soul. There are people who search for wealth with the same passion and commitment.

Then there are others who seek power like they are seeking their lives. Similarly there are people whose life's central theme is work, labor.

This concept of four types -- the brahmin, the knowledgeable, the kshatriya, the warrior, the vaishya, the tradesman, and the shudra, the workman -- was very meaningful. When it came to be associated with birth it became diseased and distorted. Otherwise it was very different. In its true sense the concept meant that there are only four types of men in the world. And this concept has not gone wrong even today; it will never go wrong.

There are only four types, not more.

There are people who can produce wealth, and they are a few. It is not necessary that the son of a rich man should produce wealth; he may do something else. So

an element of liquidity is there in this concept. But some persons are born with the talent to produce wealth, and they make for businessmen. And a few others can produce knowledge. Here is Karl Marx who spent twenty years in the library of the British Museum so that he could write DAS KAPITAL. He used to be so absorbed in his studies that when the library closed each evening, the clerk usually found him Lying unconscious in his chair and had to help him go home. He read so much all through the day that by the evening he fell into a swoon. This man is a brahmin. The fact is that knowledge cannot be created without the brahmin. He who brings knowledge to any part of the world belongs to the category of brahmins. So also, only a few men can create wealth.

And the pursuit of power and politics is different from the pursuit of wealth. If the passion for politics is right and pure, then the pursuit belongs to the category of the warrior. The warrior totally goes in pursuit of power and spends his life in that pursuit.

And the shudra, the worker type, is not going to disappear from the earth. Of course, nobody should be a shudra by birth. Shudra means a type of person who works, eats, procreates and dies. And many people are shudras, workers, and they are found all over the world. They are found in the families of brahmins, warriors and businessman. Shudra is not a derogatory term. Shudra is one who does no more than fulfill the basic needs of nature; he just works, eats, sleeps, produces children and dies. He ends his life living on the plane of an animal .

But we are used to thinking that a person is a brahmin if he is born in the family of a brahmin. The brahmin by birth is no more. And the businessman by birth is not going to last long. But if somebody has talent to produce wealth, his freedom to do it should be secured. Similarly, the worker should be free to work and the priest should be free in his own pursuit.

Socialism is going to come in the way of every pursuit; it is going to control knowledge itself. In Russia today there is a basic restraint on the quest for knowledge. Every kind of knowledge is not allowed to be sought and found. If someone in Russia wants to do research on meditation, it is simply impossible. There is no way to be a sannyasin in today's Russia. The sannyasin is also on a quest, and who can say that this quest may not prove to be the ultimate. When all knowledge has exhausted itself and failed, maybe the quest of the sannyasin is proven right. Because a researcher like Einstein says at the close of his life, that after all his search, he came to a point where he could only say that he knew

nothing. The more he searched the more he found that he was ignorant. And the more he searched the more he found that there still remained an infinity to be found. At the end he could say this much: that life is a mystery -- beginningless and endless.

Now this man is a sannyasin; he has reached the very shore of mystery. But in Russia you cannot talk of mystery. The search for God is forbidden; it is considered to be dangerous.

This means that there is no way to be a brahmin in Russia. Even the search for wealth is prohibited.

Only today someone informed me that the Russian government has invited Ford to build a motor factory in their country. Now they invite Ford from America, and they destroyed, in the past fifty years, the possibility for a Ford to be born in Russia itself. Ford could have happened in Russia; it was not necessary to import him from America -- but they had to. Why? What is the matter? Russia, too, had its business class with the acumen to produce wealth. What happened to it? In fifty years' time the socialist government regimented it, suppressed it and ultimately destroyed it. It is in shackles at the moment; it cannot move a finger.

Socialism does not give freedom to any of these four types of people. And that is why I believe that socialism is inhuman. On the other hand capitalism is a humanistic system which gives full freedom to all kinds of people, and in all directions of life, to grow and be themselves. If it is not giving full freedom right now, then efforts should be made that it does. If there are any impediments, they should be removed. But there are people who say, "Why get rid of the disease? Get rid of the diseased himself." They say that there is no use treating the patient, better to kill him. In fact, there are flaws in capitalism, but they can be removed. But the socialists argue that the flaws are so numerous that it is better to finish the system itself. They don't know that the death of capitalism may turn out to be the death knell of man himself.

In this context I would refer to another matter.

Yesterday I called Gandhi a bania, a businessman, and some friends felt hurt about it.

Gandhi was a businessman; he was a businessman in the same sense in which I referred to four types of men a little while ago. Somebody has said that I used a

derogatory term to describe him. Some people think that "businessman" is a derogatory term. Even the businessman feels so. But no word is derogatory. Businessman is a fact; he is a type of man. And I say that Gandhi is not a brahmin, not a warrior, nor a worker; his basic personality is that of a businessman. But it is just a statement of fact; there is no condemnation implied in it.

We have become so feeble in our thinking that we understand only the language of praise or condemnation; we do not accept a fact, that there is something like "fact". If I say that so and so is suffering from T.B. he may say that I slandered him. But it is simply a fact that he is suffering from TB. -- there is no condemnation involved in it. I called Gandhi a businessman just because he is a businessman. I did not mean to condemn him in the slightest. His whole personality was such. But the friend wants me to give a few more illustrations.

A thousand illustrations can be given, but I will mention only a few. Mahavir Tyagi has mentioned an incident in his book of memoirs. One day Gandhi visited his town and addressed a largely attended public meeting in the evening. At the end of the meeting he asked for donations from the audience. Many people gave money; women gave away their ornaments, like earrings, bracelets and anklets. Gandhi accepted them and piled them on the podium. Before he left the meeting he asked Mahavir Tyagi to carry the donations to his residence.

Tyagi arrived at Gandhi's place at about midnight. He thought that Gandhi had gone to bed; he also thought that he himself could have waited until the next morning before he saw him. But he had no idea of the mind of a businessman -- he never goes to bed before finalizing his accounts. And so he was surprised to see that the old man was wide awake at that hour of the night.

As soon as Tyagi arrived Gandhi enquired if he had brought everything from the meeting place, and immediately he opened the bag and examined it. He found one earring missing. "No woman will give only one earring; she will donate the pair. So go back to the meeting place and find the other," he said to Tyagi. A tired Mahavir Tyagi returned to the meeting place at one in the morning and found the missing earring with the help of a gaslight. When he returned to Gandhi's place he again thought that he had gone to bed, but no, he again found the old man awake. When he received the earring he was satisfied and said to Tyagi, "Now you can go; the account is okay."

I did not say anything derogatory about Gandhi. This is also a kind of mind; there is nothing of condemnation about it. And if we had rightly understood the personality of Gandhi, it would have made a great difference in the life of India. Because if the leadership of this country was in the hands of a businessman, the danger was inevitable.

It was really the job of a warrior which Gandhi, a businessman, undertook to do. Bhagat Singh would have done it well; Subhas Bose would have done it still better. But it could not happen that way. And Gandhi did what his type was capable of doing. The country was partitioned and it was a mutilated and lifeless independence that we had, because the businessman is always for compromise; he cannot afford to be an extremist. He says,

"Let us settle on the basis of fifty-fifty." India's partition was the result of Gandhi's leadership. Because the mind of a businessman does not like fight, he chooses compromise instead. He believes in settlement on the basis of give-and-take. He avoids conflict and confrontation. Whether Gandhi said so in explicit terms is not the question. It was the mind of a businessman that the country acquired from the leadership of Gandhi.

This is precisely the reason why Gandhi found accord with the British, because they also are a community of businessmen. The British could not have found this accord with anyone else. It was impossible to have accord with Bhagat Singh or Subhas Bose. They had accord with Gandhi because their mental type was the same. The British were essentially businessmen, who by mistake became rulers of a country and wielded power.

And the person who confronted them was, to their good luck, also a businessman. It is surprising to see that the British government provided every security to Gandhi, something no government on earth had ever done to their enemy. We could not save Gandhi's life after the British left India, but he was alive as long as they were here. It is such an interesting episode of history.

The British gave full protection to Gandhi because it became clear to them that sooner or later he would prove useful to them, and so they should be on good terms with him.

others in his place would have been difficult to deal with. There was a sort of inner communion between him and the British rulers of India. This relationship

was bound to happen, because it was so natural -- they belonged to the same category as far as their mental makeup was concerned. They could understand each other, and so a rapport was established between them.

That is why India could not win her independence; it was given as a gift, and such an independence is worse than slavery. Independence is wrested, it is achieved, it is not had by begging. Independence is not had through negotiations and compromises; it is always wrested from unwilling hands. And the freedom that is wrested is alive and dynamic; it has a verve and vitality of its own. And one that is granted and received as a gift is as good as a corpse. It was a lackluster independence that came to India in 1947; it missed the glory and grandeur that comes with it. And it came with all the ugly consequences that independence coming as a gift brings with it.

Gandhi never tired of preaching non-violence, because a businessman cannot afford violence. Have you cared to note that the Jain teerthankara Mahavira is a kshatriya, a warrior, but the community that gathered around him is entirely a trading community.

Mahavira is a warrior, and the twenty-four teerthankaras of the Jains are warriors, but not one Jain is a warrior -- all the Jains are businessmen. What is the matter? There is no other reason than the fact that non-violence made a deep appeal to the merchant community. Mahavira's non-violence made a great impact on the minds of the shopkeepers. Similarly, the businessman's mind in India found itself in accord with Gandhi's non-violence. It said that Gandhi was right: if we are not going to be violent with others, others will not be violent with us. It was because of Gandhi's leadership that non-violence became the basis of a movement for independence. India had to go through tremendous misfortunes because of the non-violent character of its movement for independence.

It was a great misfortune that Gandhi did not allow the hatred and violence that naturally surged in India's mind against the British to express itself. He suppressed it. Whenever a little violence showed itself, the businessman in Gandhi panicked and retreated, as if he thought aloud that shopkeepers could not afford violence, they were all for compromise.

He always retraced his steps.

I remember a story; it is perhaps one of the folk tales of Rajasthan. The story

says that there was a warrior, a kshatriya in a village, who was very proud of his mustache; it symbolized his brawn. He sat all through the day in front of his house twisting the ends of his mustache upwards. He had it announced in the village that nobody could pass his house twisting the ends of his mustache upwards.

One day a businessman, who had newly settled in the village and who sported a mustache, happened to pass the house of the warrior while twisting the ends of his mustache upwards. The warrior stopped him and said, "Listen, businessman, stop twisting the ends of your mustache upwards." The businessman said, "Who are you to order me about?" The warrior stood up and handed the businessman a sword saying,

"Then take this sword and let us settle the matter once and for all."

The businessman was flabbergasted, he had not imagined that things would come to such a head. He said, "Okay. But before we fight a duel let us do one thing that is necessary. In case I die, my wife and children will suffer. And if you die your wife will be widowed and your children will have to beg. It will be better if both of us go back to our houses and finish with our dependents. And then we will settle our score."

The warrior readily agreed. If he had been intelligent, he would not have made an issue of his mustache. The businessman went home, and so did the warrior. The warrior killed his wife and children and returned to his seat, twisting his mustache. When the businessman came back, he had no mustache at all; he had shaved it. And he said, "I thought there was no point in fighting to death for nothing, and I shaved my mustache!"

This is a type of mind; there is nothing derogatory about it. This is just to say that the warrior is like this and the businessman is like that. It is not a condemnation.

Whenever Gandhi was in difficulties, whether it was the Chaurichaura incident or something else that turned violent, he at once beat a retreat. He thought it was better that he shaved his mustache. Why fight? The result was that the hatred and violence of the Indian people against the British, which was simply natural, was repressed. And because of this repression, the two major communities of India -- the Hindus and the Mohammedans -- fought with each other, and bloody riots

took place throughout the country. If India had fought the British openly -- with swords -- the Hindus and Mohammedans would not have fought among themselves. As we could not fight the British, the repressed hatred, the unspent violence, had to find an outlet somewhere.

Where could it go? And it found an outlet in the Hindu-Mohammedan riots, in violent infighting.

It is generally believed that Gandhi tried his best to prevent the infighting between Hindus and Mohammedans. But I say that he was responsible for the whole tragedy. You can understand this easily if you are familiar with the findings of modern psychology.

The feeling of hatred and violence against the alien rulers was so powerful -- and very natural at that -- that it could have set fire to the British regime and thrown it out of India.

Such a tremendous energy was suppressed, and it had to find other ways to express itself.

It could not have done otherwise.

For example, there is a petty clerk working in some office. One day his boss berates him He is so hurt that he feels like strangling his boss, but he simply cannot do it; it is unthinkable. So he suppresses his anger and puts a false smile on his face and goes about wagging his tail before the boss as usual.

Then the clerk leaves for home in the evening. Watch his bicycle; he is pedaling it with great force. Why? He is just giving vent to his repressed anger against the boss. He would have beaten him with his shoes, but he could not. Now it is as if he is beating the pedal with the same shoes. And he drives fast. Now his wife should know that the lord and husband is coming home after he had some trouble with his boss. But she does not know a thing. She is fondly expecting her husband home. The husband too is not aware of what he is going to do after reaching home. But you can know that he is now going to strangle his wife in the place of his boss. He will find a thousand and one excuses to punish her --

the bread for his dinner was burned, the bed was not made, and so on and so forth. And he takes her to task, he thrashes her. In reality he had to thrash the boss, but he dared not.

So the anger deviates and makes the wife its target.

Hatred is stored in his mind; it is bursting. If you close the drainage of your house, then filth will be all over the place. As a house needs a drainage, so also our violence needs a let-go. And if it is not allowed a right outlet, it will find a wrong one. And the violence expressed the wrong way will do you more harm than one expressed the right way. It proved to be so.

But the wife is also helpless; she cannot beat the husband in retaliation. Up to now the wife has not gathered that much courage... but she should. Husbands themselves have taught the wives that husbands are their gods. Now it is dangerous to beat a god, although the wife has her doubts too. What kind of a god is he that beats his wife without reason?

But she has to believe what she had been taught to believe.

So the wife of the clerk, in her turn, waits for her son to return from the school. These are all unconscious deviations. The son is returning from school; he is not aware of what has happened between his father and mother. He comes home singing a film song. The mother immediately grabs him by the neck saying, "What a dirty song it is!" It was this very song he sang while returning home the previous evening and the evening before that. And the mother herself sang it, his father too. Their forefathers had done the same --

there is nothing new about this song -- but today the mother is about to strangle him on the grounds that he sang an indecent song.

Now what should the son do? Should he hit his mother back? But the world has not become that civilized yet. So he goes inside his room, picks up his doll and tears it to pieces.

The mind has its own energy. Gandhi caused deviations in the way of India's natural energy by thwarting it, suppressing it. If India's violence had been directed against the British -- which was its natural course -- a splendored country could have emerged out of that clean fight. Then India would not have been divided into two parts; it would have remained one and whole. A direct fight with the British power would have disciplined us as a people, given an edge and sharpness to our energy and a dignity and grandeur of our own. A straight and clean fight with the alien rulers would have filled us with hope and confidence, verve and vitality; it would have made our life lively, juicy and

beautiful. But that could not happen.

But we had to use the sword nonetheless, and we used it against our own people. This is how the Hindus and Mohammedans clashed, and clashed like savages. And who is responsible for the massive violence that blasted this country after it became independent on August 15, 1947?

People are dishonest who say that the British government engineered the communal riots and infighting. Some people say that Mr. Jinnah was responsible for it. Others say other things. No, this is wrong. None of them, neither Jinnah nor the British were behind the holocaust. The real reason was that a volcano of hate and violence was smoldering in India's mind, but it had no outlet. So when India was partitioned, the suppressed volcano found an opportunity and it erupted. The pain of hundreds of years of slavery found an outlet. The country was partitioned and a million people were killed. At the price of a million lives we would have wrested our freedom from the British a long time before. If one fine morning a million people had only shown readiness to die for their country's freedom, the British government would have left the very next morning. But it could not be.

When I say that Gandhi was a businessman, I say it after due consideration. And I do not mean to slander him in the least. And it will stand you in good stead if you take him to be what he is -- a businessman. Then you will be careful in relating with him in the future. If this country has anything to do with the shopkeeper's mind, then it will never have that dynamism, that elan vital, without which we would be as good as a dead people.

The tradesman has his usefulness. He has a place in the society, and he is valuable.

Similarly the warrior has a place in the society, and he is useful and valuable. The priest is equally useful and valuable. And the laborer also. They all have their distinctive usefulness and value. And in the humanist sense no one is more or less valuable than the other.

But it should be clearly understood that socialism is going to wipe out these distinctive types altogether, because it does not accept them. It says that all men are the same -- but all men are not the same.

A friend has a question, and a few other friends have put the same question with

some variations. They want to know on what authority I say that Gandhi was opposed to railways, telegraphs and airplanes. They also say that I am wrong to say so.

I wonder if you read anything at all.

If you only read Gandhi's hind swaraj you will see that Gandhi denounced modern machines and technology a thousand times more than what I have mentioned here. But the book hind swaraj was written way back in 1905, and someone may say that it is not right to judge a person who died in 1948 from his writings of 1905. I will agree with him.

But in this context there is a letter of Gandhi's which he wrote to Jawaharlal Nehru in 1945. Nehru had asked Gandhi by letter if he still stood by his opposition to railways and telegraphs as he had written in his book hind swaraj. Gandhi wrote back to Nehru -- and this in 1945 -- that he stood by every word he had written in hind swaraj. It appears that the questioners don't read a thing. They have said that I am not aware of facts. But the truth is that Gandhi himself was not a well-read man, and his followers are still less so. In my understanding, Gandhi is the least-read man among the great men of this century. He was unaware of all the great findings of the present times. He knew nothing about Freud and Jung. And what he talked about celibacy was three thousand years old and now out-of-date. He had no knowledge of the studies done on birth control. He read Marx in jail in 1942, and I doubt if he read him fully. His grasp of Marxism, however, was never deep.

He, of course, read the GITA and the RAMAYANA, but the GITA and the RAMAYANA are the textbooks for the ignorant villagers, not for the knowledgeable.

Gandhi read poorly and thought poorly, and his followers, it seems, do not even read their leader's writings.

A last word. Another friend has said that I did not illustrate my point when I said that there was contradiction in Gandhi's professions and his practice.

I would like to give a few examples.

Gandhi preached non-violence throughout his life, but his own personality was violent, utterly violent. He never tired of talking of non-violence. You may ask

how I say it. We need to understand this thing carefully.

If I point a knife at your chest and say that I w ill kill you if you don't accept what I say, then you will say that I am a violent person. Now just reverse the process. Instead of pointing the knife at you, I point it at myself and say that I will kill myself if you don't accept what I say. Do I now become a non-violent person? Does one become non-violent by just turning the direction of the knife, or changing its target?

All his life Gandhi used this threat, this coercion that he would kill himself if his point of view was not accepted. This is coercion, this is violence. Gandhi coerced Dr. Ambedkar through fasting. He could not bring about one change of heart, though he resorted to any number of fasts and fasts-unto-death. Not one heart was changed, although he always talked of"change of heart" as the object of his fasts. Ambedkar just gave in under duress and accepted Gandhi's demands. Later on Ambedkar said that Gandhi should not be under the illusion that he changed his heart. He still believed that he was right and Gandhi was wrong, but he submitted because he realized that it would be too much if Gandhi lost his life for his demand. His heart was not at all changed; he relented because of Gandhi's coercion. Gandhi used this kind of coercion all along.

Whether you threaten to kill yourself or kill others, it is all the same and it is violence.

Both kinds of threats are violent. But we fail to observe it, and we think that the threat to kill oneself is non-violent. Truth is otherwise; it is subtle violence. It is not non-violence.

Non-violence is very different. Non-violence means that there should be no threat, no coercion whatsoever, to kill oneself or others. Ask the people who were associated with Gandhi. Ask his own sons. Ask Haridas Gandhi if his father was non-violent. If so, then why did he become a Mohammedan? If Gandhi was non-violent, why did his son take to drinking and meat-eating? If Gandhi was non-violent, why did he have to fight his father all his life?

It was because Gandhi's non-violence was so sadistic, so torturous that he tortured his own sons. Haridas left home and ran away for fear of his father, that he would destroy him. Haridas did not know that the person who could not be a right father to his own son was going to become the father of a whole nation.

Really, it is easy to become the father of a nation; it is much more difficult to be a right father of a single son. Being the nation's father you are really nobody's father. Ask Haridas and you will know whether Gandhi's personality was violent or non-violent. Ask Kasturba, his wife, about it. A lot is being written about the married life of Gandhi and Kasturba and it is trumpeted that they made a very ideal couple. It is sheer tall-talk; but in talking tall we are a matchless people.

In reality the married life of Gandhi was ridden with constant conflict and strife, but we claim that it was the ideal of ideals. Ask Kasturba; look at their whole life.But we don't see at all; we are so skilled in shouting and slogan-mongering that we don't need seeing.

Whenever they had a guest in their house in South Africa, Gandhi always asked Kasturba to clean the guest's latrine. Once Gandhi saw that Kasturba was weeping while coming down the stairs with the guest's chamber pot in her hands. He took her to task saying,

"Don't cry. Service should be rendered with a smile on your lips." The poor woman is being forced to clean the latrine of others; she is not doing it for service. She is just in the trap of her husband who, in his turn, is in the trap of a set of principles. So he coerces his wife to clean latrines with a smile. Many times he took Kasturba by her wrist and threw her out of the house at midnight, on the grounds that she did not follow his principles.

This man is not non-violent; he is utterly violent. But he swears by non-violence; it is his ideal. And it is on account of his ideal of non-violence that it becomes so difficult to understand his personality.

Life is a very complex affair; it is not that simple. So when I say something don't jump to a conclusion about it. Whatever I say is well-considered; I have given thought to it.

But Gandhi's devotees think that they are protecting him by questioning me. They are mistaken to think so. The more questions they ask, the more vulnerable they make him to beatings. There is no place in my mind for Gandhi. I consider him to be an utterly diseased personality, so don't get him beaten unnecessarily. It is not necessary to drag him in the midst of our present discussions. Right now I am speaking on the question of socialism and capitalism, and you bring him in for a beating. It is absolutely uncalled for.

I am grateful to you for having listened to me so silently, with love. And at the end I bow down to the God enshrined in the heart of each one of you. Please accept my salutations.

Beware of Socialism

Chapter #5

Chapter title: Gandhiism capitalism and socialism

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Hundreds of questions -- all in the context of what I said in the course of the last four discourses -- have been received. I will try to answer in brief as many of them as is possible.

A friend has asked if in my view socialism call come through Vinobe Bhave's sarvodaya

-- his concept of "the good of all".

Sarvodaya, whether it is Vinoba's or Gandhi's, cannot bring socialism, because the whole concept of sarvodaya is concerned with taking man back to the jungle -- the primitive way of life. The ideal of sarvodaya is opposed to capitalism -- not in the sense of going beyond it, but in the sense of going behind it.

There are two ways of getting rid of capitalism -- either you go beyond it or you go behind. And for some people going back is always easy, and alluring too. But going back to the past is neither possible nor desirable.

We have to go forward willingly or compulsively. Those who go forward compulsively do so listlessly like animals. And those who go voluntarily do so with a song in their hearts and with a rhythm in their walk. They go with a hope and a dream and a thrill to find their future.

The thought of going back to the past has gripped India so firmly that whenever we are faced with difficulties we immediately think of turning back. And the reason is psychological, which we would do well to understand. It would be very useful to investigate the psychological meaning of Vinoba's sarvodaya and of the whole Gandhian thought and outlook.

Firstly, everybody thinks that everything was so good in the past. The village was good and the city is bad just because the village is of the old and the city is new. But it is the people living in the city who think that the countryside is so good. The villagers themselves don't think so. It is one thing to take a day off and go round a village, and quite another to spend a lifetime in the countryside. It is funny that people who lay so much stress on the importance of sarvodaya and the village life and the old system of village government, don't live in the villages themselves, they all live in cities. Living in cities they write books on the beauty and grandeur of the natural life in the village.

These illusions that we nurse are, of course, very beautiful to look at, but they are dangerous nonetheless.

The village has no future; the future belongs to the city. In the coming world there will be no villages; there will be cities and such big cities that we cannot think of. A village in relation to the city is like a straw hut in relation to the skyscraper. Neither the straw hut nor the village is going to exist in the coming world. In fact, the future world will be the world of the cities and their citizens.

The truth is that as man progresses, he will gradually be freed from his dependence on the land. And unless man is fully freed from the land he will not be a fully cultured man.

Man has been constantly freeing himself from his dependence on many things, but he is yet dependent on the land for his food. But it is possible that he will soon be free in this respect too. In my view, the growth of technology will end his dependence on land. The day is not far off when he will not depend on the land for his food. Food will be produced as any other industrial goods are

produced -- in workshops and factories. Food will be produced chemically and synthetically.

And it is not possible to remain tied to the land forever. The area of cultivable land is small and the population is already too large. And agriculture, as we know it, is much too old and archaic, and it cannot have any deep relationship with the highly developed technology of today. New kinds of food and new ways of food production will have to be found. Food can be obtained from the seas. Really, sea food is already in the market. And efforts are on to extract food from the air and sunrays. And sooner or later food can be had directly from the cosmic rays.

Until man frees himself from this dependence on the land, his poverty and degradation are not going to disappear completely, because the amount of land available is small and the population is increasingly large. We have reduced our death rate, but it seems as if it is impossible to reduce the birthrate.

Sarvodaya is a movement tied to the land. And it is a past-oriented movement, believing that man's salvation lies in his return to the caves. It is not a future-oriented movement.

And there is no future for a land-bound movement and a movement that is past-oriented.

Secondly, the entire philosophy of sarvodaya is based on renunciation, austerity and simplicity. For thousands of years man has been taught the virtues of renunciation and austerity. But nobody follows it in practice and nobody is ever going to follow it. Once in a long while somebody comes along who is austere and simple, but he too is not really simple. He can wear simple clothes and eat simple food, but his mind is more complex than the mind of an ordinary man. Simplicity is not a way of life; expansion and complexity is the way of life.

Remember that life evolves from the simple to the complex. the amoeba is the first tiny living being from whom man came into being. In the course of time, it is the amoeba that developed into man. And the amoeba has only one cell; it lives with a single cell. It is the simplest creature on this earth. It has no intelligence; it has nothing. It can just breathe; it exists and dies. But as life evolves and grows, it begins to be complex. Man is more complex than the monkey. The man of Bombay is more complex than the primitive man.

The more complex the brain, the more developed one is.

Gandhi and Vinoba are too much obsessed with the old idea of simplicity. They believe that man's life should be simple and his needs few. It would be great if he produces his clothes with the spinning wheel and operates his farms manually without the help of tools. Tools and implements, according to Gandhian ideology, are not necessary.

But these ideals are unnatural. This talk of return to nature is very unnatural. Man has been constantly moving toward complexity and his needs have been constantly multiplying. All the teachers of the world said, "Reduce your needs," but nobody listened to them. Needs cannot be reduced; it is not in the nature of things. It is not the way of life.

Life is always in favor of increasing its needs. Of course, if you want to die, you can very well reduce them. And if the needs are reduced to the minimum, you will die in the end.

In the process of reducing necessities a masochist personality, a suicidal personality, is born -- one who goes on destroying himself.

Life is ever-expanding; it is an expansion of necessities. And the greater the expansion of necessities, the greater the production. The greater the necessities, the more man invents.

The greater the necessities, the more latent parts of man's mind are activated. The greater the needs, the more man is freed from his animality. An animal is animal because it has very few needs. And if his needs are reduced absolutely, man will have to live again on the level of the animals. His humanity will just wither away. Man means a complex life, full of expanding necessities.

A movement like sarvodaya insists on simplicity and a minimum of needs. Its whole emphasis is this. It means that it lacks a correct understanding of man's mind and brain.

Yet it has appeal. It appeals because when we feel overwhelmed with complexities, when they become too much and we are at our wits' end, we tend to return to the past, to our childhood, to the state of simplicity. You will find a fifty year-old man, if his house is on fire, behaving like a child of ten. He will scream and wail in utter helplessness. This is psychological regression. Now he

is a ten year-old, not fifty years old. The house being on fire has suddenly made the situation too complex for him to understand and cope with.

Not knowing what to do, he is beating his breast, running here and there aimlessly and crying. It was all right for a child to do what he is doing, but it is wrong for a grown-up man to scream and shout. What has happened to him? How is it that a man of fifty has turned into a ten year-old? Why is he so childish?

The situation is too complex for him to understand, and he does not know what to do --

so he has mentally regressed to his childhood days and is behaving like a ten year-old.

Many times, in the course of a day, we become like children. It is because whenever a complex problem arises, the mind calls for rising to the height of the problem, it calls for more intelligence and alertness. And when we fail to rise, we just regress, we retreat.

Somebody gets drunk or finds other ways to become unconscious. Being drunk he forgets the problem, he escapes it. And if the problem is still more complex he takes to bhajan-kirtan -- singing sacred songs in prayers to gods and goddesses. Singing sacred songs, he is again like a child trying to forget the problem. Desire for drink or bhajan or going back to the past is always escapist.

Life is a struggle with new problems, new challenges that are ever arising.

Sarvodaya and things like it are all escapist; they just ask you to escape the world of complexities. They say, "Why live in Bombay? Why live in New York? Why live in Moscow? Go back to the old-fashioned ways; return to the forest and live like the people who live there." If you can live without clothes, the better; you will be free of even plying the spinning wheel. Go back and still further back in time when human beings lived on roots and fruits. If not, then even a little agriculture will do. All emphasis is on return to the past. Why?

It is because some people are overwhelmed by the great and complex problems of life; they are frightened and panicky. It is they who are talking of returning to the past, to the simple.

My vision is quite different. I maintain that whenever great problems arise, it is the time for a leap forward. Human consciousness takes a jump when such great problems surround you; they compel you to think and reflect, to struggle and to stake your very life. Only when it is really a question of life and death does consciousness prepare itself for a great leap.

At the moment mankind is faced with any number of complex problems and great challenges. And there are two kinds of people. One kind is in the great majority -- and to us they seem to be right too. This majority says,

Why get into trouble? Let us return to the past when we had no problems. Let us go back to the days when there were no railways, no automobiles, no airplanes and no big cities.

There were small villages, and we should return to them."

There were no big universities then, only small gurukuls -- teachers' family schools, where a handful of students lived with the family of the teacher and studied. Now great problems are arising because a single university has twenty thousand students to manage.

Problems are bound to arise. Never before in the world have twenty thousand young people collected and lived within one campus. A son in the old days lived with his father who always dominated him. Now twenty thousand sons are together, whereas, nowhere can you find twenty thousand fathers living together. The difficulty is really enormous.

Twenty thousand sons are smothering their parents; now the parents feel dominated and suppressed. Now there is one way: You do some real thinking to solve the problems of twenty thousand young people living on one campus. This is difficult because the old cultures have no answers for these problems. You cannot find an answer in any of the old scriptures because the problems are so new. The coming together of such a large number of youth at one place is altogether a new phenomenon.

The truth is that youth itself is a new phenomenon. This youth did not exist in the old world. In old times there was the child and then there was the old man, but there was no youth. Before one attained to youth he was married, married in his very childhood. So the phenomenon of youth and its problems simply did not arise in the past, because youth was bypassed and one entered old age straight

from childhood. Being married at the age of ten, one did not have the opportunity to be a youth. He will have been a father of two kids by the time he turns twenty. So he is already saddled with the responsibilities of an old man. A father is never young; he is always an old man. This was the answer that the old days had for the problems of youth -- it just did not allow the child to go through the period of youth. And then the children lived with their parents, and so again there was no problem. Now twenty to twenty-five thousand -- at places, even a hundred thousand young people -- are living together. Evidently an altogether new problem has arisen. So what to do?

The exponents of sarvodaya suggest that the universities be disbanded and youngsters sent back to their villages where they should receive only primary education -- what Gandhi calls "basic education." This much education is enough -- that they learn carpentry, shoemaking, weaving and things like these. Nothing more is needed.

This country will be ruined if it accepts Gandhian teachings. Is basic education really education? It is not education at all, it is really an escape from education. But for them the problem is solved; they say that this is how we can get over the trouble.

We have to grapple with the problem; we cannot escape it. Now that a new problem has arisen, it will have to be solved in a new way. But since the exponents of decadent wisdom have no answer they plead for a return to the times when these problems did not exist. I say that not only India, but the whole world is facing this problem of young people. All over the world they are coming together and they have become a class. The old people are not a class. So we have to think it through and find a solution. And we have to think some new thoughts.

My understanding is that going back to the village and resurrecting the gurukuls --

teachers' family schools -- and asking the youngsters to sit at the feet of the old gurus will not do. Those times are past, and what the teacher of old taught is of no use now. We have now so much to learn that small gurukuls cannot handle it. Even the existing universities are proving inadequate for the task, which is so vast. We need still bigger universities. We need much bigger libraries. Vast knowledge has been coming into being and with such speed that it has become

difficult to communicate it to the new generation.

The gurukul of old cannot do it; a single old teacher cannot do it. It is just out of the question.

So the question remains -- the question of educating thousands of tens of thousands of students. What to do? The cry of the obscurantist, the escapist, is: "Just close the universities and go back to the past." Gandhi was very much against universities. He did not send his own sons to schools and colleges, his sons remained uneducated. He was so much opposed to universities. He thought that the university and modern education were diseases to be shunned.

This whole outlook is the result of lack of new thinking on their part.

But I say: Work hard, grapple with the new questions and find new answers. In my understanding, it is necessary to bring the new and the old generations together.

Wherever there is a university campus, a campus of retired elders should be attached to it.

When elders retire from their active life let them becomes residents of a university campus. If there are ten thousand young people in a university, let there be ten thousand elders too, and let the two classes live face-to-face with each other. Undoubtedly the youngsters will bow down before the understanding, the experience and the knowledge of a lifetime that the elders will bring with them. That is why I say, instead of escaping, let the elders live together with the young. It will yield valuable results.

In a university where ten thousand elders, with the experiences of a lifetime, live with the young, teach them, play with them, mix with them and chit-chat with them, there can be no problems of youth. Let the two generations encounter each other directly.

There is a great difficulty in this matter. We say that there are two generations -- the old and the new. But while the new generation is a fact, the old is not. The old generation is not gathered together; it is scattered all over. You can meet the new generation living together in thousands at one place, but where can you meet the old? So bring the old generation together. but then new questions will arise because the problems are new. And they will again call for new thinking

and new answers. The difficulty is that we prefer to go back to the past rather than do hard work.

During the bhoodan movement, the voluntary land distribution movement, lots of land was distributed under its auspices without giving a thought to the fact that arable and in this country is already so heavily fragmented that any further fragmentation will only add to the poverty and misery of the country. But Vinoba has a very amusing theory. He says that he places much more value on the land donated by a poor farmer. He does not consider it a great donation if a farmer owning a hundred-acre holding donates five acres to him. But when a poor farmer gives away two and a half acres out of his five-acre holding, it is really a great donation. This is a very dangerous theory, because a five-acre holding is already small and unproductive. It comes in the category of uneconomic holdings. Now Vinoba wants the owner of this holding to donate two and a half acres and so be left with one half his former small holding. Now two holdings of two and a half acres each will yield much less produce than when they were a single five-acre holding.

This is somewhat like something I heard in a story.

A king wanted to marry off his son. He asked his minister to find a beautiful girl of sixteen for his son. The minister searched and searched, but he could not find a beautiful girl of sixteen. So being a mathematician, he brought two girls of eight years each.

thought that two half-rupee coins are as good as a one-rupee coin. And, if the minister had not found two girls of eight years each, he would have settled for four of four years each. But four girls of four years each do not make for a woman of sixteen. This is no mathematics.

The mathematics of Vinoba led to further fragmentation of agricultural land in the country. But we are so stupid that we fail to understand the reality and live on propaganda.

Recently, Nagpur University did research on the bhoodan movement. I don't remember the exact statistics of that research, but they are approximately as I am going to reveal.

The research has uncovered very strange things, and I think the report of the research should reach every home in India. It has been found that ninety percent

of the entire land collected in donations in the course of the movement is government land. Just note that ninety percent is government land falsely donated by the public. Of the remaining ten, seven percent is barren land which can produce nothing. And of the remaining three percent, one percent is involved in litigation and you cannot be sure of it. How much real land did Vinoba or his movement acquire?

But who cares? They are only concerned with large figures, figures in hundreds of thousands for propaganda purposes. Nobody cares to see if the donations are genuine, if the land is genuinely owned by the donors and if the land really exists. Cases have come to light that people owning not a square inch of land have also donated land. But w hen a crowd is on the move anything is possible.

The irony is that the land of the country is already so much fragmented that you cannot solve any national problem by further fragmenting it through donations and distribution.

The real problem is how to get rid of this fragmentation so that large-scale farming is undertaken. If the entire land of a village is pooled together, farming can become an industry on its own. Agriculture can be turned into industry. And it is urgently necessary.

But we have believed in the virtue of donations since olden times -- that problems could be solved through donations. The real problem that we have now is immense and it cannot be solved through charity.

If we really want to solve our problems, we will have to go to their roots, to their very roots.

But we think that if we teach people to live simply, to be contented with a couple of bits of bread and one piece of clothing, the problem will be solved. The matter is not that easy. Man is not ready to be content with one piece of clothing and two slices of bread.

Up to the time he has not even two slices of bread, he may nod yes to your teaching, but the moment he has two slices in his hands, he will ask for more. He will now ask for washing soap. And when the washing soap is in his hand, he will ask for a radio. And after the radio he will demand a car.

And he is right in asking for more and more; he is not wrong. Life is ever-

expanding and making new demands. This is how i. should be, because then alone life will have dynamism.

And if a society chooses to be simple and do with less and less, it will cease to grow, it will become stagnant and static, stunted and dead. There are primitive societies -- they are non-dynamic societies, dead societies. They don't move, they don't grow, they just vegetate. They don't produce a Tansen or an Einstein or a Kalidas; they produce nothing worthwhile. The aboriginals live like animals; they eat, sleep, produce children and die.

They don't live on the level of men, but of animals. They just exist.

The philosophy of sarvodaya or Gandhiism is not concerned with man's growth and expansion; it is not future-oriented. Socialism will never come about through this sort of thinking. In order to bring socialism, we need a philosophy of growth and expansion, a philosophy that believes in the infinite expansion of needs. And its beauty is that as man's needs grow and multiply and as he works hard to achieve them, his intelligence and his soul expand and crystallize in the same measure. And the ultimate crystallization that happens is unique and extraordinary. As a result of this crystallization, which comes with the expansion of needs and their fulfillment, one comes to realize that there is yet another dimension of life -- the dimension of the inner, of the soul. And unless this dimension grows and expands, wealth, affluence and palaces are of no advantage. Only a wealthy man can realize the futility of wealth. The last use of wealth is that it gives you the capacity to free yourself of wealth, to go beyond wealth. He alone becomes aware of the inner needs for the first time, who has gone through the whole gamut of outer needs.

I have heard a story from the UPANISHADS.

A young man returned from his gurukul, the family school of his teacher, after learning the doctrine of ultimate knowledge -- knowledge of the brahman. All the way back and at home he talked of nothing else but the ultimate, God, soul, spirit and the rest. From morning to evening people heard him talking incessantly of divine knowledge. Then one day his father said, "Look son, first you undertake a fast for twenty-one days and then we shall discuss the ultimate."

The young man went on a twenty-one day fast. One day passed and then the next day passed -- he stopped talking about the ultimate knowledge; instead he started

talking about food. After seven days he was found talking about food from morning till night.

During his sleep too, he dreamed about food. After fifteen days, whenever his father asked him to say something about the ultimate, he kept quiet; but the moment one mentioned the word "food", his discourse on food came flowing like all irresistible stream. On the twenty-first day his father said. "Let us now sit and discuss the brahman."

The son said, "To hell with the brahman; tell me something about food, Dad!"

Then the old father said, "Listen son, I say to you that food is the first brahman, the first God. So learn it first. What are called the ordinary needs of life is the first God. After this fulfillment begins the expansion of life, the world of expanded needs, and that is the outer God. And when the outer God is realized, one begins to be aware of the inner brahman, the ultimate."

It is generally thought that a social system founded on the basis of Gandhian principles will be a religious system, but I fail to understand it. No religious society can be born in conditions of poverty and degradation. It is always in conditions of plenty and affluence that the flower of religion blooms. Whenever a society attains to material affluence, its people become interested in religious pursuits. Only they can go in pursuit of spiritual fulfillment who have their bellies full. For empty bellies the question simply does not exist.

According to my understanding, socialism will not come with the coming of sarvodaya; on the contrary, if any day socialism comes, sarvodaya may follow it as a consequence.

Socialism can only come after the full development of capitalism. Socialism will be like a fruit on the tree of capitalism. And if socialism develops rightly, then a social condition may arise in which equality and the good of all will happen. One may call it sarvodaya and another may call it communism -- names don't make a difference. The road does not go from sarvodaya to socialism. but from socialism to sarvodaya; and no socialism is possible without developing capitalism.

But sarvodaya, as we know it, is against the expansion of capitalism. It is opposed to the age of machines and industries. "Return to the times of Rama, the primitive times," is its war cry. So if you have understood my view fully, it is

this: At the moment sarvodaya is the greatest impediment in the way of socialism, because sarvodaya believes in returning to the pre-capitalist stage while socialism is a stage beyond capitalism. If we are going to be sarvodayaist, then we can't be socialist ever. Then socialism will be impossible.

But we are not going to be sarvodayist. Vinoba has failed miserably, and he is tired and retired. He has failed so badly that it does not seem likely that he can do anything now.

But Vinoba is not to blame, nor are the people to blame. It is the wrong vision and philosophy of sarvodaya, which is responsible for the fiasco. Vinoba is bound to be tired and defeated; his defeat is certain. It is because we have no idea of what human nature is.

The philosophy and vision of life should be in full accord with man's nature. In my understanding, capitalism is a philosophy of life that is in absolute accord with man and his nature. It is not only an economic system, it is a philosophy of life, a way of life as well.

A friend has asked:

Question

YOU SAY THAT SOCIALISM WILL COME WHEN CAPITALISM IS FULLY

DEVELOPED. BUT WHO IS GOING TO BRING ABOUT SOCIALISM?

We think that certain things come only when they are brought about by someone or the other. When I say that as a child grows, youth comes in, you don't ask as to who brings it about. When I say that as youth grows, old age comes in, you again don't ask about the agent who brings it. The growth of childhood turns into youth of its own accord. And similarly, the growth of youth turns into old age. It is not a question of being brought about through some agency. As there are natural stages of life, so there are natural stages of social growth. If capitalism develops, it turns into socialism on its own; nobody works as a medium. And when you talk of the medium, it means that capitalism is not ripe enough and so the question of the medium arises. A medium is thought to be necessary only when capitalism has not developed well and therefore socialism has to be brought about. But this will be an imposed socialism and not a natural one. It will, however, come of its own if we just let it come. Socialism can come only if

we don't force it.

In answer to your question I can only say that the transformation of a social system happens by itself -- as youth turns into old age. Can you say on which particular day of the calendar the young man turned old? Many of you have grown to youth and old age.

Can you say when the particular events took place? You will say that you don't know.

The growth of life is so silent, so subtle a phenomenon, that no demarcation lines can be drawn between different stages of its growth.

Yet we are trying to guess as to when capitalism will change itself into socialism. In my view two conditions have to be fulfilled for this change to happen.

First, it will change when there will be an abundance of wealth, not before. All attempts to change it prematurely will fail. In communist countries like Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia, capitalism is returning, because they acted in haste by imposing socialism.

Now they are slowing down the process of socialization since they realized their mistake.

They realized that it was a mistake to have forced the pace of collectivization, and now they are relaxing its rigors. Their experiences of thirty or forty years have shown them that this thing does not agree with human nature, and that human nature should be allowed to have its way. You can force a man to work for a day or two, even for three, but you cannot do so forever. Only that can last forever which is in harmony with human nature. Socialism lies in abundance of wealth -- excessive wealth. This is one thing. But the question is how this abundance of wealth will happen.

Abundance of wealth cannot be created by man's labor; labor will have to be replaced by technology to achieve this aim. It is worthwhile, therefore, to give up the mad attempt to replace capitalism with socialism, and engage ourselves instead in replacing man's labor with technology.

Another friend has asked:

Question

YOU TALK OF DEVELOPING TECHNOLOGY, BUT IS IT CHILD'S PLAY?

Yes, development of technology is child's play. Go and see Germany, or Japan for that matter. Germany was razed to the ground during the Second World War; it was destroyed as no other country has ever been destroyed. But in twenty years' time after the war, Germany became much more prosperous than it ever was before. Similarly, Japan was destroyed in the same war, but just in twenty years, Japan attained a prosperity that it never had before.

But there is a glaring difference in the attainment of the two parts of Germany. Some of my friends visited Berlin only recently. They tell me that there is a world of difference between the eastern part of Berlin, which is in the hands of the communists, and its western part, which is in the hands of non-communists. While the communist part of Berlin is still poor and miserable, the affluence achieved by non-communist Berlin is astounding. Berlin stands today as a symbol -- where the difference between the two systems is so clear-cut that choice is easy.

Another friend has asked:

Question

YOU HIGHLY PRAISE CAPITALISM, WHILE YOU OVERLOOK THE

ACHIEVEMENTS OF RUSSIA. HAS NOT TECHNOLOGY BEEN DEVELOPED IN

RUSSIA? HAVE NOT THE RUSSIANS REACHED THE MOON? DON'T THEY

HAVE EVERYTHING WHICH CAPITALISM HAS?

Russia has developed; I don't deny it. There is a skyscraper in Moscow too, but there are hundreds of skyscrapers in New York. And the single skyscraper of Moscow has been built at the cost of the starving people of Russia. People were forced to sacrifice so that things like the skyscraper could be built. And it is built with the sole purpose of show --

they want to tell those visiting their country that they are not a poor people, that they have their skyscrapers too. But in America sky-scrapers have come up with the same ease with which the grass grows from the soil. No force was applied and no sacrifices made in America for building skyscrapers; they came by themselves. Moscow too, has an underground railway whose stations are lined with marble, but the subway is also a showpiece achieved at a tremendous cost -- paid by the people's sweat and blood. There are high class hotels in Moscow for visitors, and in the neighborhood of those very hotels, poor people had to stand in line for hours in 1935 for their daily bread. Both things -- showpieces and suffering people -- are standing side by side, but we don't see them.

Recently the Russians tried their best to reach the moon, but they had to slow down their efforts because the game proved much too costly. To land one man on the moon was going to cost one hundred and eighty billion rupees, so they retraced their steps under the pressure of the poor millions who said they were being starved to pay for a mad race.

Russia ultimately realized that the stake was costly. But for America it was really child's play to reach the moon.

Russia has, of course, developed its technology, but it is a forced development. And because it was forced, it is now lagging behind. The toiling people have lost their nerve, and they are no more prepared to work that hard. Gone are the clays of revolutionary zeal; the revolutionary fever has died down.

Life goes by natural laws. And for man, one of those natural laws lies in capitalism.

When I say that technology is a play, I don't mean that it will appear by magic. But twenty or twenty-five years are nothing in the life of a country. But if you keep thinking that technology is not child's play, which can be achieved in a short time, you will not achieve it even in a thousand years.

I have heard a story.

A man is sitting on the outskirts of his village with his lamp, and it is dark all over. A passerby comes along and asks him what he is doing there. The man says that he has to go far to visit a temple on the top of the hill, yonder, ten miles distant. The passerby says,

"Then come along. Let us go together. Why don't you start walking?" The man replies,

"My lamp is so small that it hardly lights a distance of three feet, and the journey is long.

I have been calculating and wondering how I can cover such a long journey with this small lamp." The other man says, "You are simply crazy! If you keep sitting here you will die before you can start on your journey. You will never reach that temple; your arithmetic will kill you Get up and get going. When you have covered a distance of three feet the lamp will light up three feet further, and thus you can go on and on. But if you keep calculating you will never reach your destination. And if you give up calculating and start right now, you can complete a journey of even a thousand miles with this lamp."

The problem with us is that we think that we have been a wise people since time immemorial. But down the ages we have just been calculating and arguing about everything without doing a thing.

That is why you ask how technology can be possible -- a big thing like technology will take twenty years at least. I say, it will not happen even in twenty years if you think that it will take a long time. And it can happen in just ten years if you decide to start the work right now. It is a matter of being clear and positive and starting the work immediately.

And the matter is so urgent that if you do not go with a sense of urgency and go fast, you will be nowhere in the world fifty years from now. Maybe the distance between you and the rest of the world will be the same as exists today between the aboriginals of Bastar and the people of Bombay. It is already happening and happening every day. We are not aware of how things are moving on the world scale.

Recently I came across a few statistics that are startling. The scientists living today all around the world form ninety percent of the entire number of scientists that the world has produced in the course of the entire history of mankind. That means that ninety percent of all scientists have been born in the last fifty years only, and only ten percent were born in the course of ten thousand years. And, of the existing ninety percent of scientists, fifty percent are gathered in one country alone, and that is America. Again, that means that America has at its disposal

fifty percent of all the growth of scientific intelligence and scientific knowledge that the human race has produced in its whole life. This collection of scientific intelligence may soon reach a stage of growth where it may become impossible for us to catch up with it. So we have to start fast and work with a sense of utter urgency.

But our ways are strange. We are not concerned about technology and growth. We have other things to be concerned with. We are concerned about how to bring socialism and distribute wealth equally. We are concerned with strikes and go-slow-strikes, with gharaos, with physically encircling and confining the executive authorities, and things like that. We are concerned with postponement of university examinations. We are concerned whether a certain village should remain with Mysore or go to Maharashtra. We are worried whether Ghandigarh should go to Punjab or Hariyana. There seems to be no end to our madness. Chandigarh will remain where it is, but we are unnecessarily worried.

I have heard that when India was being partitioned, a mental asylum came right on the dividing line, and it had to be divided between India and Pakistan. But the difficulty was that neither India not Pakistan was interested in having the mad people. So the authorities thought of consulting the inmates themselves. They had to explain the whole thing to them again and again, and then they could get it. What is interesting is that while those who were sane agreed to divide their country, the insane ones asked, "Why should we divide it at all?" The authorities said, "Because of the Hindus and Mohammedans." The madmen said, "Let them be. Here, we have both Hindus and Mohammedans, but we never fight among ourselves. It appears that Hindus and Mohammedans living beyond the walls of this madhouse have surpassed us. We live together amicably; there is no difficulty. We eat and drink together and we never use knives and shotguns against each other. Then why do you way that we are mad?"

The authorities further explained, "We don't have much to say, we only ask you what side you choose to go with -- whether you go to India or Pakistan?" To this the madmen said,

"We want to remain where we are." The officers again said, "Don't worry. Of course you will remain here, but let us know which country you choose to go with?" The madmen then retorted, "Have you gone really mad? If we have to remain here, why does the question of going anywhere arise?"

Now the authorities found themselves in an intractable situation. It was difficult to argue with mad people, so they came upon a device instead of carrying on the argument with them. They just drew a line with a piece of chalk and divided the asylum into two parts.

Half of it became Pakistan and the other half became India. And a wall was then erected.

Only a little while ago I heard that at times madmen climb the dividing wall and say to each other, "How strange. We are where we are, we are both in the same place, but now we are two peoples -- Indians and Pakistanis. And all because of this wall."

The madness that once existed in the form of India and Pakistan has taken new forms.

Now we are quarreling over whether a particular district should remain with Mysore or it should go to Maharashtra. The mad people of Mysore shout, "We want it to remain with Mysore," and those of Maharashtra scream, "No, we want it for ourselves!" And no one asks why we are worried about a district which will always remain where it is. But the whole country is involved in any number of such pseudo-problems. The politicians are perverting the mind of the country by raising false issues instead of genuine ones. While the real problems of the country are different, the leaders are agitating for meaningless issues. Some people say that cow-slaughter should stop. When man himself is about to die the politicians are protecting the cow. Some people may come forward and agitate against killing of mosquitoes and bugs, and there is no doubt that they will be acknowledged as leaders.

Now men are on the brink of death and the country is about to be pushed backward forever and ever. The country is facing grave dangers. Those who have a worldwide view say that by 1978 a great famine will visit India in which two hundred million people may die. When I talked about it with a great political leader in Delhi, he said. "1978 is very far. What really matters for us are the 1972 elections. We will see when the famine comes and two hundred million people die, but the immediate question is who is going to occupy the chair of the prime minister of the country."

Right now there is only one most significant question before the whole country

and it is how to produce wealth. It is a momentous question: How to take the country through a technological revolution so that we produce enough food and clothes and other necessities of life?

But the problem is not going to be solved. It is not going to be solved because the politicians are diverting the attention and energy of the people in wrong directions. They have always been entangling the country in meaningless problems. But they can raise only such questions as their small minds are capable of raising. It seems that because of their ideal of simplicity they are practicing abstinence from intelligence too. Maybe renunciation of intelligence is essential for being a leader. Their minds are full of cobwebs -- cobwebs of all shapes and sizes. And these cobwebs are so venerable for someone or other that you cannot remove them. They all bear the trademarks of different gods and goddesses, saints and mahatmas. It is so difficult to tear them off because their patrons are always coming in the way.

We must stop thinking in terms of the spinning wheel if we really want to take the country through a technological revolution. We have to think in terms of giant machines and automation. The difficulty is that on the one hand we want to develop technology, and on the other. we cry "Victory to Gandhi!" and swear allegiance to his ideology. This creates all inner contradiction and a split in our minds. Gandhi is against industry and industrialization; he is against centralization of production, and you celebrate his centenary with fanfare. You also want technological revolution, but both Gandhi and technological revolution cannot go together. The country's mind has to be united as one and we have to be very clear about what we want and what we are going to do. We have to act without any further loss of time.

And we can act. The country has an enormous labor force, and there is plenty of intelligence too. In fact, the country today has an excuse of intelligence. For the first time the youth of India have shown a glimpse of wisdom, but they don't know how to use it in a creative way. That is the reason they are engaged in destructive activities. Please remember that the energy that is used in destruction is the same energy that creates. It is the same energy that creates and destroys -- the difference is only of its direction. If it does not get an opportunity to express itself creatively, it turns to destructive activities.

This country lacks the will to create, although it has enough energy to seize and grab from one another.

That is why I say that socialism is not a creative ambition; it only believes in grabbing and looting and distribution of the booty. The have-nots are out to plunder the haves. But the tragedy is that we don't have enough wealth to distribute. Very few people have wealth. If many had it, we would then have seized and distributed their wealth.

And we have no idea of creating wealth. We cannot have it unless we inspire the entire youth force, the coming force of the country, with a vision of creativity. This vision, this spirit of creativity, is difficult to achieve when the leaders of the country are busy exhorting the youth that we are poor, not for lack of the spirit of creativity, but because of exploitation. What they say, however. is utterly wrong.

People are also being told that they are poor because of a decline in our moral character. I would like to discuss this issue in some detail, because it is very important to us. We have received a few questions on this matter also.

The whole country is being told that because characterlessness is rampant, character has to be rebuilt first, and unless we do it we cannot be wealthy and prosperous. Wherever the question of corruption and destructiveness arises they immediately come out with the theory that it is so for want of basic character. But I say to you that character is simply impossible in poverty. Character and poverty do not go together. Character, too, is a luxury which is only possible in conditions of prosperity and affluence. I don't say that character necessarily comes with prosperity. What I mean to say is that with prosperity character becomes possible.

But how can a poor man have character? Life closes in on him from all sides and suffocates him so that he is compelled to say good-bye to character. Nevertheless, the politicians go on saying that poverty cannot be eradicated unless corruption is eradicated.

This is putting the cart before the horse. So I say let us drop the talk of character and characterlessness for the present and put all our energy towards eradicating poverty. And when poverty disappears, corruption will disappear on its own. Poverty has to go first. It will not go with the departure of characterlessness, just because the latter is simply not going to disappear. But with the departure of poverty and degradation, the level of character will begin to rise.

A magistrate visited me the other day. By the way, he told me that he did not

accept bribes. I asked him to let me know the limit within which he refused bribes. He was startled and said that he could not understand what I meant. I said, "Would you accept if I offer a bribe of five paise?" He said, "What are you talking about? Five paise? Never!"

"And if I give you five rupees?" I asked again. He again said no. And I asked, "And what about five hundred?" He repeated his no, but this time his no was not that emphatic.

When I raised the assumed figure of a bribe to five thousand rupees, he queried about the purpose of my asking these questions, but he did not say no this time. And finally as I raised the sum to five hundred thousand he said that he would have to think about it.

What does lack of character mean? You are a man of character if you refuse a bribe of five paise and you become characterless on accepting a hundred thousand rupees? No, every man has his limit. If the offer is only a few paise he can say no and retain his character because he has had lots of paise in his possession. But if the offer comes in the form of five hundred rupees, the question arises whether to refuse or not to refuse it.

Someone can afford to refuse five hundred rupees because he has much more than that in his bank accounts. But when an offer of five hundred thousand comes along, he thinks then that character is not worth this sum -- it can be given away for the moment; there will be enough time in the future to mend it.

A little while ago a friend informed me that the Jain saint Chitrabhan has gone on a trip to a foreign country. Since he is a Jain saint he is not expected to go overseas, but he went in spite of the opposition of the Jains. The friend wanted to know what I thought of it.

I said that in the first place Chitrabhan was not a saint, not because he went on a foreign trip, but because he continues to be a Jain, and a Jain cannot be a saint. A saint is just a man, he is not a Jain or a Hindu or a Christian or a Mohammedan. And secondly, he escaped with the kamandol -- the water container -- and other things which are symbols of a Jain saint, and which the Jains had asked him to return to them. The Jains had gone to the airport when Chitrabhan was leaving, to seize his symbols, but he managed to hold on to them. It appears that the saint and his opponents are in the same boat, because both believe that sainthood

consists of those articles. Chitrabhan escaped with those things because he thought he would be reduced to nothing without them. He had nothing else with him; without those symbols he would not have made his foreign trip worthwhile.

His saint-hood was confined in those things.

As the friend wants to know my view, I say it was sheer cunningness on his part to do so.

If he thought it right to travel abroad, he should have given up the symbol of those who were opposed to his going to a foreign country as a Jain saint. But he held on to the symbols and kept them with him with great effort because he did not want to lose the respectability that went with the symbols. This was sheer cunningness, pure dishonesty on his part. It is not a question whether his foreign tour was right or wrong -- the question is that you want to have the respect that comes with those Jain symbols, the respect of the Jains who are opposed to your tour. It was not proper at all.

The friend also wanted to know what Chitrabhan would do after his return from the foreign trip. I said he would atone for it. He would atone and apologize. And the act of atonement will not be that severe, because there was no airplane when the Jain scriptures were written. So he will atone for using a vehicle like the bullock cart and be back in the Jain fold. He will be a saint again.

The thing is that he had to choose between character and the tempting offer of a foreign tour. While he was here he had never used any transport, he always walked on foot from one place to another. And he was enjoying the respectability that comes with being a Jain saint. Now an invitation from Switzerland created a big problem. It was like the offer of a bribe worth five hundred thousand rupees. What to do? To accept it or not was the question. He had to make a choice between his character as a Jain saint and the respectability that comes with a foreign tour. The choice was really difficult and he had to give up character because the temptation was great. If you had offered to take him to Poona in your car, he would have easily turned it down, because it was like a bribe of five paise. He would have walked to Poona or foregone the offer altogether. But the offer of a visit to Switzerland was too much; he had never been there. Until then he had been confined to Bombay; he had not even seen Poona. So Switzerland was too much and he had to give up his character.

Generally the movement of a Jain monk is very restricted. Because he cannot use any transport, he has to walk and walk. He lives like a frog lives in a well. So when a Jain monk goes from one part of a city, say Bombay, to another part, it is said that he has changed his city. He is still in Bombay, but he has changed his city. It is the story of the mad asylum being repeated. So it was with Chitrabhan before he went to Switzerland. His visit to Switzerland was like an offer of a bribe of five hundred thousand rupees, and he accepted the offer in the hope that he will mend his character later on. After all, it does not take much time to mend character.

This is how everybody's mind works.

Really, it is poverty that does not allow character to grow. And who is poor? Lack of any kind, any sort of inferiority, makes for poverty. For example, an Indian monk thinks that unless he has visited Europe and America, he is not a great monk, he is far behind Vivekanand. He is oppressed by the feeling that he will remain a petty monk if he does not visit the West. An inferior man is a poor man. Whether he is inferior in wealth or in knowledge, or in prestige or in anything, he is a poor man. And poverty breeds corruption, characterlessness. Every kind of corruption arises from poverty. And since there are many forms of poverty, the forms of corruption are also many.

Similarly, there are many kinds of richness too. There is a richness of wealth -- and it is difficult to bribe a wealthy person. Then there is a richness of knowledge -- you cannot buy a really knowing person with certificates. Self-knowledge or enlightenment has a richness of its own; it is difficult to tempt a Buddha with the things of the ego. And peace has its own richness where challenges and tensions simply go to waste.

Character comes from richness, from fulfillment -- fulfillment of all kinds. So let India understand well that it has to create richness first, and not indulge in tall talk of morality and character. Once richness is there, it will be easy to build character. But if we start from the wrong end, if we think of creating character first, we will have none -- neither character nor prosperity. On the contrary, our poverty will become accentuated and abiding. Such mistakes have been made more than once.

A farmer sows wheat in his field. With the wheat harvest comes chaff. A foolish farmer may think that if chaff comes with wheat when wheat is sown, similarly

wheat will come with chaff if chaff is sown. But it is never going to happen. On the contrary, even the chaff will be wasted. If chaff comes with wheat, it does not mean that wheat will come with chaff. Chaff is a by-product of wheat, but wheat is not a by-product of chaff.

Similarly, what you call character is a by-product of prosperity, wealth and education.

But we think in a lopsided way; we put things upside-down. We think that if we build character, prosperity and affluence will follow on their own. This is not going to happen.

It is impossible to build character without building prosperity first. If we have to have character, let us begin by having prosperity; let us begin from the beginning.

Let there be a unitary objective, a single goal before the whole country for the coming twenty years. Let us stop talking tall, talking nonsense, and work for this one objective with single-minded commitment. In twenty years' time we must reach where Japan, a war-torn and vanquished country, and Israel, a poor newborn country, reached in twenty years. If they could attain to that prosperity, why not we?

Certainly we can, but our mind is divided; we don't have an integrated mind. We think of a thousand things -- all absurd and stupid things. The creative energy of the people is being diverted into wrong channels. But it is all in the interest of the politician, who comes to power by dividing the people. Divide and rule is his maxim.

The importance of the politician in India has to be reduced. It is essential to devalue him.

At the moment he has too much value; he is at the center of the stage. He commands all our attention, all our respect, everything -- as if politics has become our life. Really it is not our life; it has fraudulently assumed this role, and it has to be pulled down from the pedestal.

One last word. If you want the good of your country, stop giving respect and adulation to the politician and make him leave the center of the stage. He does not deserve it. It is amazing that if the chamber of commerce holds its annual

meeting, the prime minister is invited to inaugurate it. And the prime minister rebukes businessmen in their faces and they listen to him in silence, with a broad, but false smile on their faces. And if it is a university convocation, again the politician is called to deliver the convocation address to the students. People who never saw the face of a university are delivering convocation addresses. It is really too much. It is time we remove the politician from this exalted position -- it is not at all necessary to exalt him, to hallow him. We have to cease looking up to him and turn our eyes in other directions.

We have now to turn our eyes to the centers of creativity. Wherever life is creative, whether it is in the field of science or wealth or health or literature or poetry or religion --

the eyes of the country should be focused on it. Let us respect the scientist, the technologist, the educationist, the poet, the writer, the producer, the worker -- they are the people who really create and enrich our lives. If we turn our backs on the politician, in twenty years we will have all: technology, wealth and character. And when the country is affluent then alone we will be able to thank God.

How can a poor man thank God? For what? Even if he goes to a temple he begs for the marriage of his daughter, for the employment of his son and for the medical care of his sick wife. And while he is standing with folded hands before a statue, he is wondering if his prayers are going to be answered at all, he is wondering whether there is God or not.

He says to himself that he will have belief in God if his sick wife gets proper medical care and his son is employed. The existence of God depends on his wife's health and his son's employment! The poor man can only beg, he cannot thank Cod.

But true religion is thanksgiving. True religion is a feeling of gratefulness. And who is grateful? Grateful is he who has everything in life, and he truly says to God, "Thank you!

You gave me happiness, you gave me peace, you gave me bliss, you gave me the fragrance and music of life, and I am immensely grateful to you!" The poor man cannot be religious. It is only the man of riches, who has riches of all kinds, who has peace, happiness and bliss, who thanks God heartily.

In the end I pray to God that the day may come when we will go to his temple not to beg, but to thank him. And that day can come.

I am grateful to you for having listened to me in silence and with great love. And I bow down to the God residing inside all of you. Please accept my salutations.

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